

# City of Fairburn Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes

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City of Fairburn  
Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes  
December 11, 2017  
7:00 PM

- I. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by The Honorable Mario B. Avery, Mayor.
- II. Roll Call was taken by Interim City Clerk, Shana T. Moss, all members of council were present; the city had a quorum and the meeting proceeded.
- III. Invocation was rendered by The Honorable Mario B. Avery, Mayor.
- IV. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.
- V. Presentations:
  1. Attorney Randy Turner of Turner, Ross, LLC. Attorney Turner called Attorney's Valerie Ross and Meredith Germain to the podium. He stated, he and Valerie had been partners for 15 years and they were pleased to announce that Meredith Germain, who had been with them for 6 years and she was now a partner with their firm and their firm will be known as Turner, Ross, Germain, LLC.
  2. Attorney Randy Turner of Turner, Ross, Germain, LLC. Attorney Turner spoke about the great friendship he has had with Mayor Avery, he has been practicing law for over thirty years, and he has never seen such a more dedicated, and good person. His firm has enjoyed serving the City of Fairburn, and he wishes the Mayor and First Lady Avery, the best as they enter the next phase. The firm presented Mayor and Lady Avery with a token of appreciation and love.
  3. Mayor Mario B. Avery, asked members of Council to join him at the podium and asked all department heads and employees to stand as he presented a token of appreciation, and dedication to Interim City Administrator, Mr. Stephen Hood. Mayor Avery stated, Chief Hood propelled the city during a difficult time and he kept the ship sailing. He was presented a unique plaque with different occurrences during his tenure from the accomplishments of his department heads. Chief Hood will also be leaving the city to pursue his passion in the healthcare industry. Chief Hood thanked the mayor, and council for the opportunity to serve in the capacity of Interim City Administrator, and he lauded the department heads, stating, "They were the finest of the finest, he allowed them to do their jobs, and they made him look good." Chief Hood thanked everyone for his thirty plus years in public service and stated he was grateful to be able to explore another career path.
  4. Chief Stephen Hood approached the podium and asked all department heads and employees to stand as he asked Mayor and First Lady Avery to come forth. Chief Hood presented a beautiful soaring eagle plaque to Mayor Avery. He thanked Mayor for his leadership, dedication, and relentless service to the Employees and

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the citizens of Fairburn. Mayor Avery's plaque had one of his favorite sayings, "you have made a mark in this region that will be talked about for decades." Mayor was pleasantly surprised and thanked the hard work of each department head. He expressed words of sentiment to Police Chief Vernal Sutherland, that the City of Fairburn is now safer than it has been in decades. He told City Engineer Brendetta Walker, her team and her, should be proud of themselves, all it takes is a ride on Highway 74 to see the development, he referenced Utilities Director Tom Ridgway, and the experience he and his team have received due to the expansive developments and working with Google, Smuckers, and Duracell. He lauded Chief Hood, Deputy Chief Robinson and the Fire Department for the short response times to arriving on scenes of fires, and the city's ISO rating, which helps the cost of home owners insurance. He thanked Interim City Clerk, Moss for coming to Fairburn and helping the city, when it was it need. He had accolades for Parks and Recreation Director, Ms. Chapin Payne and Dr. Davante Parks, for their work and activities with Duncan Park. He thanked the employees and said, "Fairburn has some great employees who work to ensure the city looks good and operate efficiently.

5. Mayor Avery presented City Administrator, Ms. Donna Gadyen, who took the helm as City Administrator on December 4, 2017. Ms. Gayden stated, she was excited and honored to be a part of the City of Fairburn.

### VI. Public Comments:

1. Ms. James Sumners of 112 Shannon Chase Court, Fairburn, GA. Ms. Sumners had a problem with the January 8, 2018 Council Meeting being in a church. That is the inauguration of Mayor Elect, Elizabeth Carr-Hurst, and Council Members: Heath, Portis-Jones, and Smallwood. He stated he did not feel a meeting should be held in a church.
2. Mrs. Tonya Clauss of 8410 Clecker Road, Fairburn, GA. Mrs. Clauss stated there are ongoing problems with Oakley, such as trash on the road as she has mentioned before. Also, the lighting on the road, big trucks speeding and knocking down road signs and the traffic light at the intersection of Oakley and Highway 74.
3. Mrs. Patricia Durette of 8415 Cleckler Road, Fairburn, GA. Mrs. Durette stated lights on Oakley Industrial are a major problem. The stop sign is down on Gillette Road and Highway 29. The city really needs to monitor the speeding of big trucks coming down Oakley. She is still upset over the council approving Saban Warehouse to the area; she has been at her residence for over 20 years.

- VII. Adoption of the Council Agenda: Motion to approve agenda as order of business for the evening was made by Councilwoman Glaize; motion, seconded by Councilman Heath.

Vote: 5-0.

Motion Carried.



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Motion to approve Consent Agenda: was made by Councilman Whitmore; motion, seconded by Councilman Heath.  
Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried.

- VIII. Adoption of City Council Minutes: Motion to approve minutes (November 27, 2017 meeting) was made by Mayor Pro-Tem, Portis-Jones; motion, seconded by Councilwoman Glaize.  
Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried.

Councilwoman Glaize presented some additions to the minutes, and Councilman Whitmore requested additional comments from him be added. Interim Clerk will make additions and these minutes will be presented at the January 22, 2018 meeting.

IX. Agenda Items (Consent)

1. Office of the City Clerk  
Appointment of the Permanent Clerk, Ms. Jennifer Elkins.  
Chief Stephen Hood  
Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried.
2. Police Department  
Appointment of Deputy Chief Anthony Bazdylo to Interim Police Chief, due to the retirement of Chief Vernal Sutherland, III.  
Chief Vernal Sutherland  
Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried.
3. City of Fairburn  
City of Fairburn's recertification through Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) as a City of Ethics.  
Chief Stephen Hood  
Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried.
4. Water and Sewer  
Sewer Repair in St. John's Crossing, resulting in sewer, manhole, and plumbing problems. There are flooding problems in St. John's which has attributed to beaver problems, some of the piping has been exposed to the weather and this repair will fix the pipes.  
Mr. Tom Ridgway  
Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried.
5. Fulton County  
Presented an intergovernmental agreement with Fulton County for providing animal services. This agreement will be effective until April 30, 2018 as this agreement will be re-negotiated due to the City of South Fulton absorbing some of the cost.  
Attorney Randy Turner  
Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried.

X. Council Comments:

Councilwoman Glaze: Stated serving the City of Fairburn was a blessing and honor, she was happy to serve. She didn't come with an agenda; she wanted to be a part of progression. She talked about how she became a council member, and referenced

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attending a State of the City address, where the mayor talked about serving your community, at the end of the meeting it was asked, "Is God talking to anyone in here?" She reflected on that passage and knew it was time for her to give back to her community. She has enjoyed working with Mayor Avery, her fellow council members, the employees of Fairburn, and working with the citizens. She said her 4 years on council were great, because leadership drives progression.

Councilman Pallend: Stated he has enjoyed working with Mayor Avery, he has done a marvelous job and great things for the city. He thanked First Lady Diana Avery for being such a great support to the mayor, and had advice for Mayor Avery, regarding Lady Avery, "as you go forth, listen to she who must be obeyed, she is a wise woman." I'm sorry to see you go, but I understand.

Mayor Pro-Tem Portis-Jones: Stated it has been an honor to serve with Mayor Avery, her decision to run for office was divine, this mayor and council have shown how a team works. She is sad to see both Mayor Avery and Councilwoman Glaize go, she is thankful the citizens elected her to a second term. It has been an honor; she is looking forward to continuing working, as there is still a lot to do in Fairburn. She thanked Interim City Clerk, Shana T. Moss for coming to the city and working hard, she is grateful for the professionalism in the clerk's office. She thanked Chief Hood for his accomplishment and the city's ISO rating and stepping in to help the city as the city administrator.

Councilman Heath: Stated he came on board with Mayor Avery, he is very knowledgeable and is grateful for the opportunity to have been afforded to serve with him. The city was \$332,000 in arrears when Mayor Avery came on board, he kept employees working, no one lost their job. Duncan Park is probably the city's greatest investment, the city could have leased the park but this administration purchased the park, the park is looking better than ever, the senior center with 84 units, over 1,000 applications were received. Mayor Avery ushered in another option with tax free bonds, the city was able to purchase the building where Georgia Military College is housed, he said the mayor had foresight and has left his mark on it. Chief Hood, kudos to you, how admirable; men stepping up and making a mark in their cities. Thanks to the City Attorney, Randy Turner, who has been supportive of Mayor Avery, he thanked First Lady Avery for her support, and praying for Mayor Avery. He closed by thanking Deputy Chief Bazydlo for his hard work, and Chief Robinson for being a kind and respectful person.

Councilman Whitmore, thanked the citizens and staff, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Ms. Meredith Germain, thank you and congratulations. To Ms. Gayden, thank you and welcome to the city. Chief Hood, thank you, we have had many conversations going over data, he shared and this information helped him a lot, hats off to you, for a job well done. He shared with Councilwoman Glaize, that 4 years ago when she ran, they went to Oz's Pizza, and during the conversation it was revealed they attended the same high school in New Jersey. He moved to Fairburn in 2011, you have done a lot for the city, thank you for



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your service. To Interim City Clerk Moss, thank you, you have set the bar high with your professionalism, you have not only shown us your professional side, but your personal side, checking on us, when we travel and asking us to check in with you, to ensure our safety, and for compiling the best travel packets. Thank you for your service.

Council Whitmore, asked Mayor Avery to stand, he recalled a conversation he had with First Lady Avery, who asked Councilman Whitmore to find something (suit) for her husband. He met Mayor Avery, regarding Durham Lakes Country Club, this was during the downward spiral of the market, they had numerous conversations, he learned a lot and Mayor Avery appointed him to the Planning and Zoning Committee. He acknowledged working with Attorney Valerie Ross and how much he learned from her, he is proud of the STEAM project that is thriving and moving forward. In closing, "Mr. Mayor, you have done an outstanding job, thank you for your leadership.

Mayor Avery, gave accolades to all city appointed board members, he thanked them for their dedication and leadership. He acknowledged Mrs. Ellen Samuels for being his executive assistant. He gave commendations to Ms. Payne and Dr. Parks for their work with the Fairburn Festival, they have taken the festival to another level, and the festival is still being talked about. He complimented Mrs. Akilah Moody Harrison for her unwavering work and dedication. He acknowledged the Mayors of South Fulton, stating it is evident of the success of their cities that they are hard working men and women with a proven track record of success.

He gave accolades to Attorney's Randy Turner, Valerie Ross, and Meredith Germain for being one of the most respected zoning attorneys in Fulton County, stating Valerie Ross has helped us tremendously. He gave accolades to Judge Monica Ewing, and was happy to report that crime in Fairburn has decreased; in 2010 the City of Fairburn had some of the highest crime statistics in the state, now we are one of the most respected in the state. He stated the utilities department is phenomenal, they have done some awesome work, the finance department has worked relentlessly; currently, the city has the highest credit rating it has ever had in the city.

He thanked Interim City Clerk, Shana T. Moss, for coming and working during one of the most critical times, the city's election qualifying period, you have been a godsend. He thanked Chief Hood, stating "Chief Hood, you are a "Man among Men, you stopped the ship from capsizing." There are not enough words to say Thank You! You served this city well.

He thanked Fairburn Citizen, Ms. Nell Smith, stating we might not have always agreed, but we both love Fairburn.

He thanked his wife, Mrs. Diana Avery for her unwavering support, dedication, never ending prayers and unconditional love.

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He closed with one piece of advice: If Valerie Ross or Randy Turner, ever make this statement: I wouldn't do it, if I were you, please take heed!

XI. Executive Session: None

XII. Adjournment: With no further business of the city, motion to adjourn at 8:20 pm was made by Councilman Pallend; motion, seconded by Councilman Whitmore.

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Shana T. Moss, Interim City Clerk

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Mario B. Avery, Mayor

I attest: