

**City of Fairburn  
Council Meeting Minutes  
October 24, 2022  
7:00 pm**

- I. The meeting was called to order by the Honorable Mayor Avery.
- II. Roll Call by City Clerk, Brenda B. James found the following members present:

The Honorable Mayor Pro-Tem Hattie Portis-Jones	The Honorable Linda J. Davis
The Honorable Alex Heath	The Honorable Pat Pallend
The Honorable Ulysses J. Smallwood	The Honorable James Whitmore

Also present was City Administrator Tony Phillips, Assistant City Administrator Jamila Criss, City Attorney Mr. Rory Starkey (Zoom), Assistant City Attorney Serena Nowell, Attorney Amber Qualls, and City Clerk Brenda James.

- III. The invocation was provided by Dr. LaReese Howell, New Horizons in Faith Church.
- IV. Pledge of Allegiance was in Unison.
- V. Presentations and Proclamations:

Mr. Phillips discussed the pictures that were displayed in the Council Chambers and said they were artistic renderings by several of our staff members in the Utilities Department. Each department has taken on various projects during Breast Cancer Awareness month, and this is one of the projects. Councilman Whitmore called today to make sure Mr. Phillips was aware of the amazing artwork that these employees had done. Breast Cancer Awareness is such an important month to raise awareness about this fatal disease and to make sure we are all doing what we can to support those who are both survivors and those who are currently going through those situations. Mr. Phillips said we have our Breast Cancer Awareness Walk coming up this Friday and invited everyone to come out and join staff.

- VI. Adoption of the City Council Agenda:

Councilman Whitmore made a motion to adopt the agenda with Councilman Heath providing the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- VII. Approval of the Minutes: Regular Council Meeting Minutes of October 10, 2022

Councilwoman Davis made a motion to approve the minutes with Councilman Heath providing the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

## VIII. Public Comments:

Mrs. Howell said City Council is moving in the right direction. She discussed speed control at Hwy 92 and Rivertown Road and stated people are speeding and asked how they could get speed bumps to slow traffic down. She stated a lot of people walk in Fairburn to and from the bus stops and her concern was someone getting hit. She said Mayor and Council was doing a great job and knows there will be more good news and great things to come.

## IX. AGENDA ITEMS:

### 1. 2023 Annual Subscription Under Supplemental Power Supply Policy with MEAG

Utilities Director, John Martin presented this item and stated the Electric Division is seeking approval of the 2023 Annual Subscription Under Supplemental Power Supply Policy between Municipal Authority of Georgia (MEAG) and the City of Fairburn. This is an annual agreement where the projections provided identify needs for both supplemental power and reserves. The supplemental power product reflects the value of capacity with energy priced at the hourly market, while the reserve capacity product is the capacity price only. Fairburn has used this method for years to ensure that there is adequate power throughout the wintry months. The approval of this policy will designate MEAG as our agent to acquire any combination of resources to optimize our supplementary power supply requirements.

Councilman Pallend made a motion to approve the 2023 Annual Subscription Under Supplemental Power Supply Policy between MEAG and the City of Fairburn and to authorize the mayor to sign the agreement. The second was provided by Councilwoman Davis.

Councilman Heath said we have purchased power in the past from Griffin and wanted to know if we still get their excess power. Mr. Martin stated not now, this item is for MEAG to be our designated agent to find these resources. After the discussion, **the motion carried unanimously.**

### 2. Resolution Authorizing Execution of the Georgia Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network Mutual Aid Agreement

Utilities Director, John Martin presented this item and stated the Water & Sewer Division is seeking approval of a Resolution and Mutual Aid Agreement between the Georgia Water & Wastewater Agency Response Network (Georgia WARN) and the City of Fairburn. After Hurricane Katrina, it became apparent with the extraordinary efforts of utilities, water associations, and state regulatory agencies, the demand for resources and knowing where those resources were available overwhelmed the ability to effectively coordinate the initial response. The Georgia WARN was formed to share resources and

to assist each other in the event of emergencies that disrupt utility services. This is an agreement with no cost to participate and provides access to all member utilities statewide and is also consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Mayor Pro Tem Portis-Jones made the motion to approve the Resolution authorizing execution of the Mutual Aid Agreement between the Georgia Water & Wastewater Agency Response network and the City of Fairburn. The second was provided by Councilman Smallwood.

Councilman Heath said we currently buy our water from the City of Atlanta, but we are in the process of a change and asked if this will affect our ability to do that. Mr. Martin stated no, this is more of a mutual aid between the cities.

After the discussion, **the motion carried unanimously.**

**X. Monthly Financial Report:**

City Administrator, Tony Phillips stated this item will be discussed at a later date.

**XI. City Administrator's Report:**

City Administrator, Tony Phillips provided a few updates and stated the Fall Festival was a wonderful, amazing day to see residents and visitors having a wonderful time without incident. He was most overwhelmed with the performance of our staff and the comments he heard most was about the employees of the City of Fairburn. A lot of employees sacrificed and did a great job and he said he was very honored to work with such amazing staff and wanted to highlight all the workers.

The 2022 tax bills are now available, they were loaded on the City's website.

There has been an update to our drive through window policy. Assistant City Administrator, Jamila Criss stated the new policy will be in effect tomorrow and is an effort to provide the best customer service to our residents. We are asking all new accounts for services, deposit payments, notary services and tax payments be conducted inside City Hall. The only payments that will be taken at the drive through window will be utility payments. This is to ensure we are respectful of our resident's time. This message will be posted on our website, our boards, and social media.

Mr. Phillips thanked Mayor and Council for approval of our sidewalk art installation project. The first sidewalk crosswalk installation was completed last week at the intersection of SE Broad Street and SE Malone Street at the Landmark Christian campus. The artist did a wonderful job and there are three others to come. All comments received so far have been very complimentary.

Mr. Phillips reminded everyone of the final Third Friday concert of the season, our Halloween concert is coming up on this Friday and we have a great evening planned featuring Milkshake, the 911 Band, and several other performers.

Mr. Phillips gave an update on our Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) negotiations. LOST provides a way for cities to mitigate millage rates. About 42% of LOST revenue comes from people outside of Fulton County and is key for budgets and cities. The cities and counties negotiate every ten years and we've been negotiating since early summer, with a deadline of December 31<sup>st</sup>. These negotiations take place in all 159 counties in the State of Georgia which are all different but have similar dynamics. Twenty years ago in Fulton County, they serviced about 229,000 residents which was about 28% of the county that received their municipal services directly from the County. At that time, there were huge areas of North and South Fulton that were unincorporated and because of that, the county was providing those services and getting about a 35% share of LOST. Fast forwarding ten years, that number dropped from 229,000 to 87,000 residents because Sandy Springs, Johns Creek, Milton, and eventually Chattahoochee all incorporated. The city's population they provided services for went from 28% of the county down to 9.5%. Today, the county services 889 residents out of 1.1 million, which has now moved down to less than 1%. There has been some recent hospital closings that have been impactful for us all and that's an element part of this negotiation. LOST cannot be used for everything, state law mandates fourteen specific services in which most are provided by cities.

Mr. Phillips summarized activities through the end of September 2022 which includes:

- Old Campbell Courthouse post fire investigation by Fire Investigators and the Insurance company was completed. The post fire building stabilization and mitigation is ongoing. The Asbestos abatement and debris removal is scheduled for next month
- Begin design of utilities for temporary Fire Station
- The Ribbon Cutting & Grand Re-Opening of Cora Robinson Park & the Dodd Street Community Plaza is scheduled for October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022
- Hispanic Heritage Month Concert – Third Friday Event – September 16<sup>th</sup>
  - Featured 23 vendors and cultural foods, retailers, and artisans
  - Featured performers: DJ Ortiz, Conjunto Double D, and Mixfina
- FY 22-23 Budget Ordinance established
- FY 22-23 Millage rate established
- 4 Administrative Staff Members, 3 Battalion Chiefs, 1 Lieutenant and 1 Firefighter attended the Ronnie Thames Silent Hero Awards Banquet
- The Fire Department attended New Beginnings Senior Center as they fed Fairburn Seniors on Friday, September 30, 2022. Chief Robinson helped prepare meat for the event
- Fairburn Flames Football season kick-off
- Launch of Fall Walking Club – 25 senior participants
- Started Citizen Police Academy class

- 27 Trees have been removed from Duncan Park
- Water Meter Replacement Program "Attentive Week". Meter contractor team replaced 29 meters, in billing route 5, as test phase
- Worked closely with the Utilities Administrative Staff to send out over 150 emails and phone calls to seriously delinquent customers
- We are continuing to actively recruit, and we are making consistent progress in filling open positions in the city to help elevate departmental service delivery

## **XII. Council Comments:**

Councilman Smallwood said the Parade and Festival were amazing and he sent an email to Mrs. Chapin Payne Scott. He told her he appreciated her and told her to take care of herself.

Councilman Pallend said what's interesting to him is watching how we go by day by day, and week by week, that strikes him because we are truly headed in the correct direction and this place is going to be a much more interesting place to be five years down the road.

Mayor Pro Tem Portis-Jones echoed what Councilman Smallwood and Pallend said about the Fairburn Fall Festival, it was fantastic. People were having fun and what contributed to that was the attitudes of the entire staff of the City of Fairburn. She elevated the Street Department, they made sure things were clean and double checking to see if they could help in any way. She was very impressed and truly appreciated all their efforts. She asked Mr. Phillips if the tax bills will be mailed. Mr. Phillips stated he will verify that and let her know, they are on the website. Mayor Pro Tem Portis-Jones stated not everyone is technically savvy and wanted to make sure they were being mailed.

Councilwoman Davis said she collaborated with all the other council members that spoke about the staff, not only at the festival but also with the event today honoring former Mayor, Betty Hannah, to dedicate her name on the building at our educational complex. She gave kudos to our Administrator and Assistant Administrator for having a vision along with our mayor to make an investment in our staff for which they acknowledge them, see them, honor them by respecting them, investing in education, and aligning salaries. All of that is an investment and people feel if you care for them and you see them, they will go miles and miles from what they are being paid. She said our staff did a fantastic job, and she is so proud of the City of Fairburn and all staff.

Councilman Heath said it is the simple things of life that seemingly bring us all together. During COVID-19, we were not able to have festivities like we did Saturday, and it seems like everything was like before, and everyone had a good time. He met some interesting people that wanted to bring restaurants and a florist to our city. Our downtown area is starting to come back and the people that live and work here can go out and have a nice

lunch or dinner. He appreciates everything and is truly impressed and loves the city, he has lived here all his life and wanted to say thank you.

Council Member Whitmore echoed his colleagues on the Fall Festival, it was an outstanding event and he enjoyed himself especially with the prayer, singing the song, the citizens giving high fives, it was really special. Last Friday, he went to celebrate Reverend Cook's 10<sup>th</sup> Pastoral anniversary, who owns Cook's Funeral Home on Broad Street. He thanked Mayor Avery and City Clerk, Brenda James for the last-minute Proclamation for Mr. Cook. He attended the First Inaugural City Councilman's event yesterday and was able to brainstorm and come together with other council members. Congresswoman Nakema Williams and Dr. Rashad Ritchie were there, it was a beautiful event. It was great seeing Mayor Hannah at the dedication and stated it was good seeing a mayor that has put in her time and seeing the things she had accomplished while in public office. Councilman Whitmore stated he walked in the Utilities Department and saw the beautiful artwork they did for Breast Cancer Awareness, it brought back a flood of memories in reference to his wife, and it helped him remember and recognize what Breast Cancer Awareness month meant to him and thanked the Utilities Department. This will be the last Third Friday event and invited all the residents to come out.

Mayor Avery recognized the staff's phenomenal come together and commended Mrs. Scott for a job well done. Leadership matters, our staff and managers played an important role for everything being synchronized properly and well represented. He commended every city department for the level of collaboration in the organization of this event. He was proud to see Breast Cancer Awareness Month was publicly recognized by the city, especially seeing Firefighters wearing pink t-shirts at the festival, this is something very important to him.

Mayor Avery commended Betty Hannah, who was the first female elected official and longest serving mayor of this city, with twenty-eight plus years of service.

Mayor Avery thanked Councilman Smallwood and City Clerk, Brenda James for resolving the voting issue where the referendum item was missing on the ballot. If residents in Fairburn voted early, they will get information in the mail to return to the polls to vote for the referendum item. He thanked Mrs. James for her expertise in getting this issue resolved.


Mayor Avery commended Mr. Phillips, all department heads, and city staff for promptly answering all customer service calls

### **XIII. Executive Session:**

Councilman Smallwood made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a personnel and litigation matter, with the second provided by Councilman Heath. **The motion carried unanimously.**

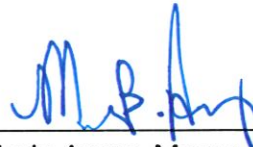
**XIV. Adjournment:**

Councilwoman Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Councilman Heath providing the second. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**



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Brenda B. James, City Clerk



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Mario Avery, Mayor