

MINUTES

Mayor and Council Meeting

City Of Whitesburg

December 12, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, 50 Booster Field Drive, Whitesburg, Georgia 30185

ATTENDEES

√ Mayor, Amy Williford (AW)	√ Councilmember, Lucy Gamble (LG)
√ Councilmember, Chris Lewis (CL)	√ Councilmember, Donna Whitley (DW)
√ Water Superintendent, Robert Gamble (RG)	√ Chief Of Police, Chris Gilliland (CG)
√ Assistant City Clerk, Wanice Odell (WO)	

I. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Williford

1. Silence All Electronic Devices
2. Ascertain Quorum

II. INVOCATION - Water Superintendent Robert Gamble

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Councilmember Chris Lewis

IV. APROVAL OF AGENDA - Mayor Williford

Motion: Councilmember Chris Lewis

Second: Councilmember Donna Whitley

Vote: 3-0

Approved: Yes

V. MINUTES APROVAL - Mayor Williford

10/25/2022 Work Session

11/21/2022 Council Meeting

11/29/2022 Work Session

Motion: Councilmember Chris Lewis

Second: Councilmember Donna Whitley

Vote: 3-0

Approved: Yes

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS & DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS (For The Record, Please State [Your Name & Address])

Each Person Kindly Limited To 3 Minutes

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Citizen W. Smolar at 122 Railroad Street stated the first item wrong with the agenda was it was changed from what was originally posted; this is not allowed unless it is done by vote of Council which it has not been done. Mayor Williford acknowledged Mr. Smolar's findings. Second item Mr. Smolar stated 61 Brannon Street property was removed from the agenda, he guessed it was because he made an Open Records request because you all were not following codes. Mayor Williford stated no, it was because there is no official application. Mr. Smolar stated yes that is right, which means no work should have been done on it. Mr. Smolar stated the property was on the agenda to be voted on tonight; Mayor Williford stated, "no, it was only on here for discussion – Mr. Smolar continued to argue loudly. Mayor Williford continued to assure him it was NOT on the agenda for a VOTE, but only for discussion. Mr. Smolar stated therefore, no work should have been done on this topic; Mayor Williford stated once again that no work has been done, only discussion and gather of facts. Mr. Smolar stated the Planning and Zoning Committee had a vote which is illegal. Mayor Williford stated, but we as a Council haven't done anything; Mr. Smolar stated it doesn't matter; I quote from the Whitesburg Code of Ordinance where it states, "neither the Zoning Committee or Planning Commission shall appear or represent any person on any matter pending before the planning commission". I have a letter where they voted on it prior to the Public Hearing. Mayor Williford stated it wasn't an official vote as there wasn't enough present to vote. Mr. Smolar continued to argue that yes there was because it only takes 3 for a Quorum same as the Council. Mayor Williford asks so does Juana vote too? Mr. Smolar stated yes, but then stated well it really doesn't say. Mayor Williford stated we will put it back on the. Mr. Smolar asks How does the Council plan to address this issue? Mayor Williford stated we are waiting on the official application. Mr. Smolar referenced the criteria and standards for considering conditional use permits and how that this property does not meet the standards (proposed use could have an adverse effect on the neighborhood, whether the property could result in a nuisance as defined under state law if not managed properly, property values, traffic/roadway issues, etc.). Mayor Williford stated we have not done anything with the property; and I have done as the City Attorney advised, I believe your 3 minutes is up. Mr. Smolar said okay that's fine; I'll just sit back down and get right back up – Mayor Williford stated that's fine.

Mr. Smolar steps forward to speak on the topic of the City purchasing K-9 or City Police Department; he says the streets in this city are deplorable and you are going to spend \$14,000 for a K-9 dog? Mayor Williford stated we are not spending \$14,000 for a K-9, Mr. Smolar sharply stated, well that's what the quote here states. Councilmember Whitley stated a group was donating \$7,000 towards part of the expense that was needed. Yes, we are discussing Roads and Water Projects every single day and they are a high priority; so no, the K-9 project is not coming in front of these projects but are being done as they are on schedule.

Mr. Smolar said fine, on to the Accounting Software item; I sat on a presentation 2 years ago and this is designed for non-profits and not for city governments. Well, there are other governments using it because I have spoken with them, and they like it, and it is working well. Mr. Smolar is arguing with Councilmember Whitley saying no they aren't and that is not true. Councilmember Whitley ask Mr. Smolar if he isn't happy with the decisions, we are making about the Accounting Software, why did you resign when you could have stayed and made the decision.

Mr. Smolar continues to talk over Councilmember Whitey and says thirdly; the minutes that ya'll approved are erroneous, because you don't have a 4.0 vote on anything you only have a 3.0; Mayor Williford stated we don't have a 4.0 vote; Mr. Smolar stated well that's what the minutes, do you not read

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the minutes? Mayor Williford stated, I don't vote unless it's 3 – it's in the minutes and they are erroneous you only had a 3-0 vote!! Mayor Williford stated okay William enough. Councilmember Whitely stated it was an oversight we are not perfect; William stated multiple times while talking over Councilmembers and Mayor it's not about being perfect it's about being right. Mayor Williford stated we will get it corrected.

Mr. Robert Gamble at 54 James Lane, asks what cost the city will incur to train the officer to handle the K-9? Councilmember Lewis stated the total cost was \$14,000 of this the city is paying \$7,000 and the other \$7,000 is coming from an Organization that does this for a lot of other small cities. Danny Salazar will be the trained Officer trained to handle the K-9 and will house it. When the K-9 is on property, it will be kept in a kennel behind the Police Department, as for food we are looking at food donations from city and businesses. Mr. Robert Gamble stated the K-9 will need to be kept cool; Councilmember Lewis stated it will have a cool place to stay. Chief Gilliland stated the Officer training is included in the purchase price. The Officer would be able to handle the K-9 after 30 days of training. Mr. Robert Gamble also posed the question about the liability insurance regarding the K-9 and the City, do we have coverage or not? Chief Gilliland stated he was told by Mr. Smolar last year at one of our meetings that the City Liability Insurance did cover a K-9. Mr. Gamble stated we just need to make certain the city is covered.

Mr. Robert K Arnell at 25 White Oak Street stated his issue was with the dog too; we need this dog like we need these cameras at the school – we don't have enough foot traffic at the school that we need these cameras, it's nothing but a speed trap!! I'm not a camera fan of the government watching what we're doing. It's all going to be a dead expense every month. Councilmember Whitely said I have lived on Main Street for 28 years, and you should know how fast these trucks and cars come flying right past the school ... it is not safe for our children; so, anything that slow them down I am all for it! Yes, it will be an adjustment for everyone. Mr. Arnell stated these cameras are just a bad idea, Councilmember Whitely asked why because you speed through the school zone – he said no, I just don't like it!! Councilmember Whitely stated well we can't just not go with something you don't like it; when there is a very good reason for doing it as it will slow down traffic. At this point there was so much discussion and arguing between Councilmember Whitley, Mr. Robert K Arnell, Mr. William Smolar that I (Assistant Clerk Wanice Odell) was not able to capture clearly who was saying what, but whoever told Councilmember Whitely "**Hush**" was very disrespectful and she deserves an apology! Thank you, Councilmember Lewis, for stating that citizens are to follow the rules of order and come to the podium and state your name and address and keep comments to the 3-minute minimum.

VII. BUSINESS SESSION

Councilmember Donna Whitley - FastFund/Araize Accounting Software - For Vote

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Contrary to what has been said, I have worked with many accounting systems during my career and from what I have seen in the overview and speaking with clients that are using the system, it is user friendly, will save us time and money and will work well for our needs. I make a motion we vote to purchase FastFund/Araize Accounting Software to replace our current QuickBooks Software from the SPLOST funds.

Councilmember Lucy Gamble stated she was a little bit leery; seems like every year or so we are changing. What is the guarantee that we aren't going to need to upgrade to something else next year? Councilmember Lewis shared there will more than likely be upgrades needed to this system, but we will not need to change to a completely new system. Councilmember Whitley shared several issues staff and Auditor has experienced with QuickBooks; Mr. William Smolar commented if you'd hire more competent staff maybe you wouldn't have an issue with QuickBooks. Councilmember Whitley stated that is not the issue; things have changed in QuickBooks. Mr. Smolar shared his concern with the internet going down and the data not being available – how would you pay employees? Would they just not get paid? Councilmember Whitely assured him, if necessary, we would drive to Carrollton and key payroll if internet were down in Whitesburg.

Motion: Councilmember Donna Whitley

Second: Councilmember Chris Lewis

Vote: 3-0

Approved: Yes

Councilmember Donna Whitley - **3 Old Vehicles Being Considered For Surplus - For Vote**

presented the adding of old city vehicles to the surplus list. City Vehicles To Surplus List). Vehicles to be added are as follows and will be advertised (Newspaper/City Website/City Facebook Page) for Sealed Bids from Jan 17th - 31st with sealed bids being opened at the Mayor and Council Meeting Scheduled for February 6th. (1995 Ford Ranger XL, VIN#1FTCR10A35TA59689 - Odometer Reading – 73,862), (1998 Ford F150 XL, VIN#1FTZF1724WNB5962, Odometer Reading 188,636), and (2000 Ford F250 Super Duty, VIN#1FTNF20L3XEE47706, Odometer Reading 134,210).

Motion: Councilmember Donna Whitley

Second: Councilmember Chris Lewis

Vote: 3-0

Approved: Yes

Councilmember Chris Lewis – Purchase K-9 For Police Department – Due to some questions we need to get answered, I make a motion we remove this for vote and table it for further discussion.

Motion: Councilmember Chris Lewis

Second: Councilmember Donna Whitley

Vote: 3-0

Approved: Yes

Councilmember, Donna Whitley

Motion: Councilmember Donna Whitley

Second: Councilmember Chris Lewis

Vote: 3-0

Approved: Yes

Councilmember Lucy Gamble – For several years I have asked for the flagpole luminated; so, I'm looking at ways to make this happen with solar, so we don't need to hotwire anything. Mayor Williford stated we just need some price quotes on this project. Mayor Williford asked if we wanted to table until the next meeting; Councilmember Lucy Gamble stated yes, if it doesn't get pushed off and buried and forgotten. Councilmember Lucy Gamble makes a motion to table this item until our next meeting to be able to provide quotes.

Motion: Councilmember Lucy Gamble

Second: Councilmember Donna Whitely

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Vote: 3-0

Approved: Yes

VIII CITIZEN COMMENTS: *(For The Record, Please State [Your Name & Address] Each Person Kindly Limited To 3 Minutes*

Mr. Robert K Arnell at 25 White Oak Street asked Chief Gilliland how many officers will be trained and responsible for the K-9? Chief Gilliland commented, as stated earlier, Danny Salazar will be the primary handler for the K-9 and usually most officers have one backup to assist the primary handler.

Mr. Ernie at Carroll County stopped by just to visit with you all. Mayor Williford asked Mr. Ernie at Carroll County asked what the plans are on starting College Street? Mr. Ernie possibly a few months off. Conversations are too

Mike Holder Banning Mills a 501C3, we preserve things and pay a lot of bills for churches; we make a lot of money and have done well. We have purchased to Sammy Duke's house and the old Racetrack along with several other of his properties. We purchased this land to try and preserve it and are looking at what would be a good investment for us and the community. We are currently considering a Recycling Center; keep in mind this is NOT A DUMP! We are thinking about something like where everything must leave as a usable product, rather than something that will just be buried. I wanted to make sure that the Council and Community understood our plans are for enhancement to the community and we thank you for your time to share our thoughts.

Mrs. Imogene Frazier requested that the podium be moved so that it is facing the audience so citizens will be able to hear speakers and citizens better. Mayor Williford agreed that it would be good to move the podium.

IX. MAYOR/COUNCIL/CITY STAFF COMMENTS:

Chief Gilliland updated on the Police Department was able to help several select families for Christmas from the funds raised at the Founders Day.

Overview of Monthly Stats:

57 Calls	137 Written	194 Warnings	2 Felonies	2 Misdemeanor's
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Superintendent Gamble stated he's waiting on Turnipseed Engineering to get back with him on setting up a meeting to review the City's water system to determine the work to be done.

Councilmember Donna Whitley - None

Councilmember Lucy Gamble commented that the Care Fund has helped 50 to 52 families for Christmas. Seniors Lunch is scheduled for Tuesday, December 20th at 11 am at La Estacion 1018 Mexican Restaurant and Council Members are welcome to join if available.

Mayor Williford commented on the great turn out for the Annual Tree Lighting and Breakfast With Santa this year; we ran out of food, but it was good to have so many to attend.

Councilmember Chris Lewis - None

Assistant City Clerk, Wanice Odell – None

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X. ADJOURNMENT:

Time: 6:43 p.m.

Motion: Councilmember Chris Lewis

Second: Councilmember Lucy Gamble

Vote: 3-0

Adjourned: Yes

Amy R. Williford, Mayor

ATTEST: Clerk

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