



# MINUTES

## Mayor & Council Meeting

### July 11, 2023 – 6:00 PM



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

#### Elected Officials Present

Mayor, Amy Williford (AW)  
 Councilmember, Chris Lewis (CL)  
 Councilmember, Lucy Gamble (LG)  
 Councilmember, Donna Whitley (DW)

#### City Staff Present

Water Superintendent, Robert Gamble (RG)  
 Chief Of Police, Chris Gilliland (CG)  
 Utility Clerk, Wendy Morris (WM)

The Mayor and City Council met for a regular meeting on July 11, 2023. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Amy Williford at 6:00 pm, stating we had a Quorum and requesting everyone to silence all electronic devices.

- I. The first order of business was the Approval of the Meeting Agenda; Councilmember Whitley asked to amend the agenda to vote on the special election. Mayor Williford asked for a Motion to approve the agenda with the amendment. **Motion By:** Councilmember Lewis, **Second By:** Councilmember Gamble, **Motion Approved** with No Objections.

#### II. Minutes For Approval:

Public Hearing Minutes May 30, 2023  
 Work Session Minutes May 30, 2023  
 Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes June 5, 2023  
 Mayor Williford asked for a Motion to approve minutes.

**Motion By:** Councilmember Lewis, **Second By:** Councilmember Whitley, **Motion Approved** with No Objections.

#### III. Citizen Comments & Discussion On Agenda Items: *(Please state name & address; speaking limited to 3 minutes)*

None

#### IV. Business Session:

**Mayor Williford** - We need to add Juneteenth as a paid City holiday beginning June 2024.

**Motion By:** Councilmember Gamble – we approve Juneteenth to be added as a city holiday beginning June 2024. **Second By:** Councilmember Whitley, **Motion Approved** with No Objections.

**Mayor Williford** – We need to adopt the updated ordinance – to be in compliance. It was some verbiage change, Kevin Drummond redid this for us. This is for ordinances and legal notices, who is going to be keeper. If no one has any questions I need a motion that we adopt the changes. **Motion By:** Councilmember Lewis **Second by:** Councilmember Gamble, **Motion Approved** with No Objections.

**Councilmember Whitley** – We talked about needing the water pump and we had to order it in an emergency. The water pump is not in yet, but is ordered and the cost was in the amount of \$4,363.00. Mayor Williford – I need a motion to approve the purchase of the pump. **Motion By:** Councilmember Lewis **Second by:** Councilmember Gamble, **Motion Approved** with No Objections.

**Councilmember Whitley** – We discussed last week about needing the tractor up and running and it is need of (2) batteries at an estimated cost of \$220 each. We need to work on the lot where city hall will be one day and fix the mud situation. **Motion By:** Councilmember Whitley - I make a motion to approve the purchase of (2) batteries to get this work completed. **Second By:** Councilmember Lewis, **Motion Approved** with No Objections.

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**Mayor Williford** – We need to adopt the Resolution and advertise it due to William Smolar’s resignation. It will be for the November election for Post 2. **Motion By: Councilmember Gamble** – That we approve the Resolution for the City of Whitesburg, Post 2. **Second By: Councilmember Whitley, Motion Approved** with No Objections.

**Citizen Comments:** (Please state name & address; speaking limited to 3 minutes)

**Arthur Tarantino** – 126 Guthre Road: Gordan County has a grant to remove old mobile homes off of residences properties, is this something that Carroll County has as well? **Mayor Williford** – Not that I am aware of, you would have to ask the county. **Arthur Tarantino** – Are City employees allowed to use alcohol and tobacco while on duty in an official vehicle or building? **Mayor Williford** – Some do use tobacco. **Arthur Tarantino** – Do all City officials have to follow city ordinance especially in a non-emergency state or traffic stop? Can a city work just park on the side of the road or in a parking lot but not in a parking spot, when not in an emergency state or traffic stop? **Mayor Williford** – Are you talking about the Police Dept? **Arthur Tarantino** – Or any city worker. Councilmember Whitley – We have our water guys sitting on the side of the road or in a parking lot at any time. **Arthur Tarantino** – More of when they are not in an active emergency or active traffic stop. **Mayor Williford** – They sit and run radar and lidar and watch traffic too. **Arthur Tarantino** – Do they not have to follow City Ordinances when they do that? **Chief Gilliland** – Emergency vehicles are exempt from that so they can perform their duties. **Arthur Tarantino** – How can the people of the City of Whitesburg get the standard operation procedure from the police department? **Mayor Williford** – You would need to do an open records request. **Chief Gilliland** – You are more than welcome to do an open records request. I want you to understand that it does cost money and our S.O.P. is very large. I have mentioned twice to you about setting up a time so that you can look at our S.O.P. **Arthur Tarantino** – ok, I would like to do that. My next question is that you called the judge on July 3, is that something that I can get for public records. **Chief Gilliland** – There’s no recording of the call. **Arthur Tarantino** – So you didn’t call? **Chief Gilliland** – Yes, I did. **Arthur Tarantino** – Is that something I can use for public requestion records? **Chief Gilliland** - What are you trying to get? **Arthur Tarantino** - How do I believe that you called, did you call from your phone? **Chief Gilliland** – I did. **Arthur Tarantino** – Is that not something I can request since you were on duty? **Chief Gilliland** – We have court on Thursday night and that judge will be here. You are more than welcome to be here at 5pm and you and I can have a discussion with the Judge. **Arthur Tarantino** – So is the phone record something I can get through public record? **Mayor Williford** – We will have to look into that, we have not had anyone request that before.

**Tori Yearta** – 1462 West Hwy 5: I am here to ask about the property at 61 Brannon Street, since we were unable to move forward with the RV Park. We want to replace the older trailer that was there with newer ones. There would only be 2 or 3. I just wanted to see if there were any issues before we move forward with that. State Bill 128 was just passed and is where you can replace older homes with something that is newer. **Mayor Williford** – I did talk to Mr. Drummond and he said he said it could fall under the grandfather clause since it was before the zoning went into effect and it would be up to the council if we let them move forward. She currently has 1 that is lived in and got rid of 4. **Councilmember Whitley** – I just have a issue with us grandfathering in things, I know I have had that discussion with either you or Amy, there’s a lot of things that use to be things around Whitesburg, I just think once you open the door to let things be grandfathered in it may open the doors for other things. **Tori Yearta** – I can see in Whitesburg where there have been multiple exceptions with things, currently in the last couple of years. **Mayor Williford** – When you pull a mobile home off you have 12 months to replace it. **Councilmember Whitley** – And yall have pulled all those off within this year? **Tori Yearta**- Yes, and I understand that its just very frustrating to me at the exceptions that have been

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made to people, not that we are asking for any big favors even though we have contributed to this city in a big way for many years and we are law abiding citizens, how come its ok that is done on Forrest Circle but something that is grandfathered in is not ok. **Mayor Williford** – I will say a previous member was supposed to sign off on that, the previous member approved it so that's where we are stuck. **Tori Yearta** – I mean there's other things, but I don't want to point fingers cause I don't want this to get ugly or personal, but at your property there is a trailer. **Councilmember Whitley** – And we followed all the guidelines. **Tori Yearta** – You didn't have to have 4 acres? **Councilmember Whitley** – We had to have .75 acres. **Tori Yearta** – I thought the city adopted Carroll County's? **Mayor Williford** – We have adopted most of the county's stuff. **Tori Yearta** – Then that is where my confusion is. Other things you are seeing is there are 3-4 lots and people have campers behind the home and people are living in them. Is that supposed to be happening? **Mayor Williford** – No one is supposed to be living in them unless they are actively building a home. **Tori Yearta** – Well that's not the case. So that is what is so frustrating for me. It seems like a blind eye turns toward some things. One thing when we first purposed seemed like and appeared like there were no issues. Everyone seemed on board about it. **Councilmember Whitley** – When you sent me an email and asked me why I voted the way I did, what were the major reasons? It was the roads and the water situation. I had said we didn't need to add that much more on the water or roads right now. The people that live around that area did yall go and ask what they are wanting? **Tori Yearta** – We did talk to them and there was one who didn't want the campground, but the rest were ok. **Councilmember Gamble** – I need a Point of order, we have gotten off track of what she asked, do we have any objections of them taking the property back to the way it was? **Councilmember Whitley** – I remember you saying if the campground didn't work out that you would put 1 trailer back in there. **Tori Yearta** – That still might be an option. **Duana Williford** – They have a right to keep it the way it is. They want to make an improvement and they have best due rights to do that. They are just going back and put back what was there. If the ordinance has changed and a place of dwelling is no longer up to code, you cant just tell people they have to tear down there home, cause its grandfathered in. **Councilmember Lewis** – So when they go back to replace the dwelling, those would be up to code as today. **Duana Williford** – Yes. As it stand, they purchased a mobile home park and they are entitled for up to 12 months to improve and put it back the way it was. **Ken Yearta** – When does the year start up because we been working through all this time. **Mayor Williford** – Mr. Drummond told me as far as that goes, since its been drug out we can give yall an extension or specific time. **Councilmember Lewis** – Do we not need to discuss this a little further, I mean it was like boom here it is. Just to make sure. **Councilmember Gamble** – I would like to make a motion that we give her an answer that she is asking for and give the council a week to make up their minds. **Mayor Williford** – We can vote on it right before the next work session, that way we don't have to call a special meeting. We will schedule this at 5:45pm on July 25, to vote on this before the work session.

**Imogene Frazier** – Main St: 3 years ago, I stood in front of this council and asked that you encourage my neighbor to clean up his yard on the north and west side of his house. The north side, which has grown into a jungle and is a haven for snakes and rats. Most of his yard has been cleaned up but nothing on the north side. I am asking please do something about it. **Councilmember Whitley** – To give you an update his cancer has advanced to stage 4, so he is unable to do anything. He is depending on his brother-in-law to help. **Mayor Williford** – We will see if we can get in touch with them or Daryl and see if we can give them some help. **Imogene Frazier** – I appreciate that.

**Katherine Barber** – 70 Brannon St: I just want to bring to your attention a potential issue, right across from my gully that I cleared out, there's a drainage ditch and on both sides of the road it is eroding and a big, massive hole. If someone can look at that, it looks like the entire road is eroding. **Mayor Williford** – We will get someone out to see what we can do.



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**Sheri Wright** – Whitesburg Public Library: Wanted to let you know we had a successful reading program this summer. This year we had 121 people sign up compared to last year’s 55. Of the 121, 52 completed the program and were awarded grand prizes and had blueberry pancakes this morning. All events, especially touch a tractor, were successful in which 80 people showed up. Our community Garden is still going strong. So far, we have produced 55 pounds of vegetables for the community.

**VI. Mayor / Council / City Staff Comments: (Mayor Will Go Around Asking For Any Comments)**

**Councilmember Whitley** – No Comments

**Councilmember Gamble** – No Comments

**Councilmember Lewis** – No Comments

**Water Superintendent Gamble** – Just dealing with all the leaks.

**Chief Gilliland** – We are supposed to get our patrol car back from the body shop tomorrow.

**Asst. City Clerk Morris** – No Comments

**Mayor Williford** – I thought Saturday we had a good turnout. I did have 2 requests, that we start it at 7 and do the fireworks at 9:30.

**Mayor Williford**, If there are no other comments, I need a motion we adjourn. **Motion By:** Councilmember Lewis made a motion to adjourn., **Second By:** Councilmember Gamble, **Motion Approved** with No Objections.

The June 11, 2023, Mayor & Council Meeting ended at 6:53 pm.

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 Amy R. Williford, Mayor

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 ATTEST: Clerk

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