**Minutes of the City Council**

**Regular Monthly Meeting**

Monday, October 9, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Washington, Georgia, held their regular monthly meeting on Monday, October 9, 2023, at the Edward B. Pope Center, at 6:00 PM.

Present were Mayor Bill DeGolian, Attorney Barry Fleming, City Administrator Jerry deBin, City Clerk Wanda Dingler, and Council Members Andy Anderson, Nathaniel Cullars, Sr., Matthew Denard, Maceo Mahoney, and Charles Wagner.

The invocation was given by Mayor DeGolian and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Wagner.

The September minutes were approved with a motion from Denard and seconded by Wagner. Considerable discussion ensued regarding the format and content of the minutes. Motion passed on a 4-1 vote with Anderson, Denard, Mahoney and Wagner voting in favor and Cullars voting no.

The agenda was approved with a request from Cullars to add back an action item recommendation removal of the $55 penalty and additional $150 security deposit for accounts that reach cutoff status. Cullars made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded Anderson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Mayor’s Topics**

1. DeGolian and deBin recognized Miguel Maraban for his dedication to the City of Washington during his employment and to honor him for enlisting in the U.S. Marine Corps.
2. DeGolian recommended adopting the minimum requirements for Council Meeting minutes, under State law, for the Georgia Open Meetings Act, which was provided by attorney F. Adam Nelson of Fleming & Nelson, LLP. Motion by Denard to accept Attorney Nelson’s minimum requirements while also maintaining flexibility to note that discussion on a significant topic has occurred without giving details of who said what. Seconded Anderson. Anderson, Denard, Mahoney, and Wagner voted yes and Cullars voted no. Motion passed.

**Council Action Topics**

1. Cullars made a motion to remove the $55 penalty and $150 additional deposit on accounts that reach cutoff status. Seconded by Mahoney. Cullars and Mahoney voted yes. Anderson, Denard, and Wagner opposed. The motion failed.
2. Council Member Cullars made a motion to replace the Martin Luther King, sign with a larger version with a complete name reference. This process is being researched by City Administrator Jerry deBin as to the proper filing procedure and requirements with DOT. A motion was made by Cullars and seconded by Wagner. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Cullars made a motion to give the Sheriff’s Office an additional $500,000 for law enforcement. Motion failed due to lack of a second.
4. Anderson motioned for a proclamation to be signed by the Mayor and all Council Members, honoring all Washington Veterans and active military and naming Duck Moore specifically as Washington’s distinguished Veteran. Seconded by Wagner. Motion passed unanimously.

**Council Discussion Topics**

1. Cullars and Mahoney discussed the need for the Council to receive periodic reports from local entities receiving funds from the City such as Animal Shelter, Family Connections, and Parks & Recreation. The consensus is that Council members serving on those boards will solicit reports and share them with the Mayor and full Council.
2. Council Member Cullars discussed grass cutting along curbs in the City. This is an ongoing project.

**City Administrator Topics**

1. Recommendation to approve property tax rate reduction of .33%. Motion by Cullars and second by Wagner. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Recommendation to approve a “Security Deposit Earn Back Reward.” deBin proposed to have the $150 additional security deposit that is paid when customer reaches cutoff status returned and applied to their utility account when their monthly payments are made on time, by the 15th of the month, for six (6) consecutive months. Deposit will apply to their account on the seventh month. Motioned by Denard and seconded by Mahoney. Motion passed unanimously.

Council then went into Executive Session at 7:15 PM after Mahoney made the motion that was seconded by Cullars. The motion passed unanimously.

With all Council and Mayor present with Administrator and Attorney Fleming, executive session began at 7:23 PM on 10/0/2023. Two personnel and one real estate matters were discussed with no final action taken. Council returned to regular session at 7:45 PM. To return to regular session motion was made by Council Member Cullars and seconded by Council Member Mahoney. All approved. The motion to adopt the affidavit was the same.