

REGULAR MEETING – CAIRO MAYOR & COUNCIL – MARCH 25, 2024

The March 25, 2024, Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers with Mayor Booker T. Gainor, IV presiding. Present were Councilmembers Demario Bryden, James H. Douglas, Timothy Gurley, Annette Higdon, and Charles Renaud. Staff Members in attendance were City Manager Julian Brown, City Clerk Dana W. Barfield, and City Attorney Tom Lehman. Cairo Messenger Editor Randy Wind was also in attendance.

INVOCATION: The Invocation was given by Mayor Booker T. Gainor, IV.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion to approve the agenda was made by Councilman Renaud, seconded by Councilman Byrden, and passed unanimously by all Council Members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Workshop Meeting – February 26, 2024. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Councilman Douglas, seconded by Councilman Renaud, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

Regular Meeting – March 11, 2024. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Councilman Douglas, seconded by Councilman Gurley, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

DELEGATIONS:

T and S Foundation, Timothy Henry – Waiving or Reducing the \$250 Deposit for Holder Park when we have our 8th Annual Back to School Give Away. Timothy Henry of 418 4th Street NE, Cairo, GA explained to the council that he wanted to rent Holder Park for their eighth annual back-to-school event but was told the rental fee had been increased \$250. He said his foundation was a non-profit organization and was not able to afford this increase and was asking the council to waive it. He said that every year they come out and feed the community and give kids book bags and other items needed to start school. Mayor Gainor asked Mr. Henry what else his foundation does for the community. Mr. Henry said they help as many of the homeless individuals in the area as they can by providing food, toiletries, blankets, and other necessities that they have available. They also serve food Monday through Friday and give out blessing bags on Saturdays. They also try to assist the ones they could by helping them get jobs so that they could become independent citizens again. Mr. Henry said there were approximately one hundred homeless individuals living in Cairo right now and they tried to help as many as they could with limited resources. Councilman Douglas asked what the breakdown was for the \$250 park rental. City Manager Brown explained that most communities charge a \$50 fee to rent a park, but you must show proof of a \$1,000,000 liability insurance policy when having a public event. It is a little harder to obtain the insurance policy, therefore that was the reason for the increase; instead of making people get insurance policies we increased the rental fee and that helped the city comp that back as well. Councilman Douglas asked what only the liability cost was to the city, City Manager Brown said it was \$150. Councilwoman Higdon asked if we paid for the liability and could we consider waiving that fee. City Manager Brown said we did pay for it and that was what Mr. Henry was requesting is that the city waive the permit fee. Councilman Douglas said he still felt that the city should still charge the \$150 but did not have a problem with waiving the \$200 deposit for the clean-up; however, he did fee that the liability insurance needed to be kept because there could possibly be an issue if something happened then the city could be sued. Mayor Gainor said he objected to that because there was a liability to the city right then at that current time since there were probably people at the park then. With any type of non-profit organization that is trying to help our citizens he felt that the fee should be waived, but if it was someone that was trying to organize a party or other type of event, he agreed it should be \$250 all day long. Councilman Gurley asked Mr. Henry to see him afterwards so that he could donate to his foundation and that he appreciated what all he was doing for the community. Councilman Byrden said that he felt that it was going to come up a lot, because it was expensive to rent the park; it is \$250 to rent the park and another \$200 for the deposit. He said what he was going to do was pay \$125 and City Clerk Barfield was going to pay the other \$125, that way, your park fee would be covered. He said he knew that a lot of non-profit organizations rent the parks and felt that what you do for one you need to do for all of them. Councilwoman Higdon asked if they could offer a motion to consider that all non-profits that are doing an event that benefits the citizens should be exempt from paying the park fees. She went on to say that she felt that it was no different than when Davis Park was used for the Famer's Market, it was a service to the community, whether it was feeding the homeless or doing a back-to-school function. She added that it was like the event they had done at the high school, they were not responsible for the liability insurance there, all of that was assumed when they go there. She said she offered a motion to approve the event and waive the \$250, Councilman Bryden said he seconded the motion, however, he did not mind waiving the fee but felt like others may say that they had previously come before council and their fee had not been waived. He said since the fee would be donated he had rather it be handled in the normal process and then the council could come back and make changes to the process of how it would be done in the future; he did not want there to be any backlash from waiving this fee since we have not done it for anyone else. Attorney Lehman said he felt Councilman Byrden was right that the process should be kept the same for

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now and be changed after this going forward. A motion to amend the previous motion to approve the event and keep the fee at \$250 was made by Councilman Byrden, seconded by Councilwoman Higdon, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Consider Live Streaming Council Meeting. City Manager Brown explained that it was previously discussed about live streaming council meeting and that it was asked to be put back on the agenda. Mayor Gainor asked if Municode was the same thing we used for archiving minutes and agendas. Councilman Byrden asked if would be the same as the quote before, us going through Blough-Tech. City Manager Brown said he felt that we probably could find a cheaper route. Councilman Byrden made a motion to approve the city to initiate live streaming. Mayor Gainor asked did we need to include which platforms we would utilize. Councilman Byrden said Facebook without the comments and then asked would that include CNS. City Manager Brown said that he was told that CNS could not live stream. Councilman Byrden said again that he approved live streaming of council meeting on Facebook without the comments or whatever platforms seen fit. Councilwoman Higdon seconded the motion. Councilman Gurley asked if we were going to create a policy behind the live streaming or were we going to just start the streaming. City Manager Brown said that if it was approved then, yes it would start at the next meeting. Councilman Renaud said he was sure the GMA or someone had a set of protocols that we could follow rather than going out blind without protocols behind this. He said he had asked Julian about surrounding communities and there are not many that are doing this, which is fine, but would like to hear GMA's thoughts on the matter. Councilman Byrden said that there were several classes that GMA teaches about streaming live and how it tells you if you are not doing this, then you are behind. Councilman Douglas said he did not think we could start next week without some type of policy and procedures. He said he had been told that it was difficult to archive these types of things when they are on Facebook, specifically for the purpose of open records and this was the sort of thing that really needed to be thought about before live streaming meetings. Mayor Gainor said that he had two things, one that there was nothing that was stopping anyone right now from taking their phones out now and videoing the meeting and two for himself being a social media person since there is no interaction between the streaming audience and council, he was not sure what a policy would look like because individuals are sitting at home viewing the meeting. Attorney Lehman said his concern was that he thought that the City Manager should do some serious investigation with GMA and surrounding communities and the possibility that someone may request to see something that we cannot produce. Councilman Byrden said that we already have Archive Social to archive our social media already so there should be no difference in Mainstreet putting something on social media when it goes live. This is 2024 and this is what is going on, you want people to see, this is no different than people creating an open records request, me going live here, Dana taking the minutes; there is no difference, we already are archiving. Attorney Lehman said he absolutely agreed with Councilman Byrden, this needed to happen, and the council needed to be as transparent as possible. Councilman Byrden said he used to record the meeting himself a few years ago and would get over a thousand views. Councilman Byrden made a motion to start live streaming the first council meeting in May and for City Manager Brown and City Attorney Lehman to report back with a policy prior to then, Councilwoman Higdon seconded the motion, with Councilman Gurley and Renaud voting yes and Councilman Douglas voting, no.

Consider 2024 Alcohol License Renewals. Motion to approve the 2024 Alcohol License Renewal was made by Councilman Byrden, seconded by Councilman Douglas, and passed unanimously by all Council Members.

Consider Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution. City Manager Brown explained the Southwest Regional Commission had held several meetings countywide to discuss and updated Pre-Hazard Mitigation Plan. There was a meeting on March 19th at the Grady County Commissioner's meeting where a public hearing was held. The City needs to adopt a Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution to be in compliance with the Federal Regulations of the Disaster Management Act. Mayor Gainor asked if there was going to be a presentation of the plan. City Manager Brown said that we could have EMA Director Phillips come and present one if needed. Motion to approve the Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution was made by Councilman Renaud, seconded by Councilman Douglas, and passed unanimously by all Council Members.

REPORTS:

CONSIDER FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2024. Motion to approve Financial Statements for the Month of February 2024 was made by Councilman Douglas, seconded by Councilman Byrden, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

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REPORTS FROM CITY MANAGER:

- The Fire Department and Water Department have almost completed the repairs/replacement of fire hydrants.
- GMA registrations open Wednesday, March 27th.

REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

- Councilman Byrden asked if we could get some speed tables placed at different areas within the city so that we could slow some of the speeders down. One of the areas he was concerned about drivers speeding was on 1st Street SW and he had the fear of a child being hit trying to cross the road to Southern Terrace. He felt that we needed to be proactive rather than reactive in taking precautions in this area because the new stop sign was not working. He also said that GMA offers several classes that could help with views on streaming. These classes were on how to be more diverse and transparent to their constituents and he felt that this was very important and needed to be taken into account when considering streaming live.
- Councilwoman Higdon said the area on Hwy 111 South needed to be evaluated due to cars speeding. She was fearful of some of the children running across the road from the housing authority to the Dollar General and being hit by a speeding vehicle. She also asked if someone could speak with Jerry Copeland on 10th Street SW about some issues.
- Mayor Gainor thanked the Fire Department and Police Department for coming out Saturday to the Hunt to Read event. He also thanked Mrs. Teresa Sigler for putting on an amazing event. He said it had been discussed about making it a quarterly event and moving it around to different neighborhoods within the city so that more children could participate. He then asked City Manager Brown if we could do a riverbed cut from 4th Street to Hwy 111. He also thanked City Clerk Barfield for receiving the agenda packets on Thursdays, stating that the extra day really helped being able to look over the agenda prior to the meeting on Mondays; with hopes that it would continue. He concluded by requesting an HR Workshop be put together in order to discuss policies and procedures along with benefits.

ADJOURN: There being no further business, a motion was made at 6:47 pm by Councilman Byrden and seconded by Councilman Douglas to adjourn the meeting.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

BOOKER T. GAINOR, IV

DANA W. BARFIELD, CITY CLERK