

WILLIAM B WHITLEY,
MAYOR
DAVID L. MINCEY, JR.,
CITY ATTORNEY
VICKI WAINWRIGHT, CLERK

CITY OF BUTLER
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COUNCIL:
EDWARD GUINN,
MAYOR, PRO-TEM
CHAS GASSETT
GLENN HARRIS
AMANZIE JENKINS
DEBORAH WILLIAMS

Council Meeting July 11, 2017

Present

Mayor Barry Whitley
Ed Guinn
Deborah Williams
Glenn Harris
Chas Gassett
Amanzie Jenkins
Vicki Wainwright
- Attorney Joel Sherlock

Media Present

Taylor County News
Flint Cable TV

Invocation –Mayor Pro Tem Ed Guinn

Old Business:

Minutes:

Motion made by Councilwoman Deborah Williams, seconded by Councilman Amanzie Jenkins, to approve the minutes of the June 15th, 2017 Council Meeting. Vote was unanimous.

New Business:

Library Board Appointment:

City Clerk Vicki Wainwright asked the Mayor and Council for a motion to appoint Ms. Barbara Harmon to the Library Board to fulfill the expired term of Ms. Gloria Sampson. The term will be from present until June 30th, 2020. A motion to appoint Ms. Harmon was made by Councilwoman Deborah Williams and a 2nd was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Guinn. The vote was unanimous.

Concerned Citizens:

City Clerk Vicki Wainwright informed the concerned citizens that due to time the comments would have to be limited to 10 minutes per person and that the Council would limit the number of speakers to 4 speakers.

Pastor Bobby Bentley from Bethel addressed the Mayor and Council on his concerns for the proposed package sale of distilled spirits in the city limits of Butler. He asked the

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Council that if it is within their authority to say “No” to any sale or promotion of distilled spirits or alcohol, that he is asking for that on behalf of the citizens of his church that reside within the city. He stated that he has lived many places and he has never seen any city or community that prospered with the increased sale, promotion, or consumption of alcoholic beverages. He said that the only people who prosper are the maker, the distributor and the retailer. He said that while it does increase the revenue of the city, the question is what would the city have to expend for extra police patrols, etc. He asked that the City of Butler not “lose what they have”. He said that Butler is a special place with special people and a family atmosphere and he does not want to see the element that would come into Butler with the potential for bars and night clubs. He also said that should the proposal come to be on the ballot that he and his congregation would mount a vigorous campaign against it to encourage the citizens to vote “NO”. He closed by saying that no matter the outcome, this is still a community of people that love and care for each other and only want the best for the community. He said there are better ways to prosper a community and he just asks the leaders to think about that before they come to a decision. He said that package sales will just bring a hurt to the community and bring trouble.

Pastor Fitzgerald Brown of Mt. Piscah came before the Council to share his concerns of the package sales referendum. He stated that he also loves this community and loves the people who reside in the community. He said that he has told his wife that this community reminds him of Mayberry. He said that he has done some research that he would like to share. He said that neighborhoods where there are bars, restaurants and stores that serve or sell liquor are more likely to suffer from violence and other alcohol related problems. He said that the relationship between alcohol and violence has been clear for a long time. He said underage drinkers are more likely to purchase alcohol in a liquor store than they are in a bar or restaurant that serves liquor. He said that assaults are more common in areas that have liquor stores, as well as domestic and child abuse and driving while intoxicated. He said that he went to Ellaville City Hall and spoke with them to see how having liquor sales there has affected them. They said that they receive about \$2000.00 per month revenue from the liquor sales. He also stated that he went to a website called “Neighborhoodscout.com” to check on crime rates. Per 1000 residents, violent crime in Ellaville was 2.13% compared to Butler at 1%. Property crime in Ellaville is 19.69% compared to Butler’s 1.59%. He said that according to the crime index, with 100 being the safest, Ellaville was at 32% of the safest cities in Georgia and Butler is at 96%. He asked the Council why would we want to put something in our

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community that the devil will use as a resource to cause child abuse, child molestation, women to be beat in their own homes, drunk driving, underage drinking, parties, and things of that nature that will hurt the people of this community. He further asked, "If it is a money issue, what is the cost of a life, or a child that had a Daddy that comes home and beats them, or a wife who lives in fear because her husband comes come and beats them?"

Pastor Mike Brandenburg of the First Baptist Church of Butler asked the audience how many in attendance were against the package sales referendum. All but 1 citizen raised their hand. He began by stating that his biggest concern is that what is about to take place will change the very nature of this community. He stated that he has seen it happen and everyone always says that they can control it. He stated that you can not control it. He said that once you let the cat out of the bag, it is out of the bag. He said that the answer is always that the city receives tax money from it and it is their job to bring revenue in to the City. He said that no, it is the leaders responsibility to provide for the families and children of this community a good, safe, decent place to live. He said that while he is against package stores, his biggest concern is talking about liquor by the drink. He stated that everyone always says that they "want a nice place" to have liquor by the drink, but once you let it in then you will have honkey-tonks and roadside bars. He said that he encourages them to vote for the good of the community and not anyone's influence. He said to vote your conscience and he believes that Christians should vote as Christians. He said that this isn't just an issue about the liquor sales in the city of Butler, that this is about the quality of life in this particular town that people have come to expect and to love.

Attorney Joel Sherlock said that there are two issues that are coming up. The first issue is the referendum on liquor package sales, which is not up for a vote by the Council but is driven by statute by the certified petition. The second issue is liquor by the drink, which was requested at the initial meeting. He said that this issue is up to the governing body to vote to place it on the ballot for the voters to decide.

City Clerk/Election Superintendent Vicki Wainwright informed the Mayor and Council that she has presented them all with a certified petition of 35% of the registered voters in Butler requesting that a referendum for packaged sales of distilled spirits be put on the November ballot. The referendum will be placed on the November 7th ballot. She

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informed them that no action is required from the Council. She stated that the ballot will read as follows:

“SHALL THE ISSUANCE OF LICENSES FOR THE PACKAGE SALES OF DISTILLED SPIRITS BE APPROVED?” YES OR NO?

She then requested a motion from the Council to place a referendum on the ballot for sales by the drink. The ballot would read as follows:

“SHALL THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF BUTLER BE AUTHORIZED TO ISSUE LICENSES TO SELL DISTILLED SPIRITS FOR BEVERAGE PURPOSES BY THE DRINK, SUCH SALES TO BE FOR CONSUMPTION ONLY ON THE PREMISES?” YES OR NO?

No motion was made, therefore the referendum for liquor by the drink failed.

Department Head Reports:

Public Works Director David Windham said that the Supplemental LMIG that includes stripping, signage, and Oak/Mulberry St. intersection has been completed except for the intersection. His plans are to get this completed before school starts. The Mobile311 project (work order program) is currently being tailored for the City of Butler needs. He hopes that on-site training will be done in mid-August and then the program will be up and running. The Rapid-Cast notification program is working and has been used to notify the customers of the July 4th Holiday closing. The GEFA Waste Water Treatment Plant project is currently in the works. The equipment has been ordered and everything has to be in place before the system can be taken down so as not to interrupt operation. He also informed the Mayor and Council that the City is currently working on a list of roads and accurate right-of-ways in order to do some extensive trimming of trees, limbs, and bushes that are impeding the vision of streets and of the sidewalks. This will be a city-wide project.

He informed them that Design-Soft, the City's IT people, has notified the City that they will be closing their business to pursue other goals. He said that the City is currently in the process of searching for another company to handle the City's IT needs. Design-Soft is helping with this search. He stated that the City was sad to hear of this closing, as the Camp's have been a huge benefit to the City of Butler.

Mr. Windham told the Council that the City staff is working hard to catch up with the grass cutting. The numerous rainy days and high amount of rain has made this a struggle. He said that in June rain totals were over 6 ½ inches. He also said that out of the current eleven days in July it has rained for five of those days equaling over two inches.

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He also informed them that he was going to need their attendance at a few meeting within the next month. He stated that he needs a Called Council Meeting on the 27th of July for the USDA Letter of Conditions at 7:00 PM. He stated that we must have a quorum at this meeting. He said that the Council and the Taylor County Development Authority will have a joint meeting on August 3rd at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers to discuss the 19/96 project and the Intergovernmental Agreement. The discussion will include what has been done, what needs to be done and what we would all like to see happen there. He would like to have a work session at the Butler Fire Department on August 10th with the GA DOT to discuss the potential Round-a-bout that the DOT is proposing at the red light in Butler.

Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn asked if the DOT is coming to address questions, etc. or are they coming to tell the City what they have to do and what they have to pay for? Concern was voiced about the fact that the roundabout will encompass two four-lane highways. Another concern was the amount of eighteen wheeler trucks that travel through that intersection.

New Road Names @ 19/96 Intersection:

The two new roads at the 19/96 intersection have to be named. The proposed name for the East-West road will be Commercial Street and the road that runs North-South will be North Park Avenue. According to the City of Butler Ordinance any new road name must be approved by the Mayor and Council. Mayor Whitley called for a motion to name the two roads the names suggested by the Public Works Director. Councilman Chas Gasset made a motion and a 2nd was issued by Councilman Amanzie Jenkins. The vote was unanimous.

Flooding at City Hall:

Mr. Windham told the Council that a couple of months ago there was flooding at City Hall must be repaired. He presented the Council with a bid from Barnes Flooring to replace the flooring. This flooring will replace everything except the carpet in the hallway and the Council Chambers. There is also some water/flood damage to the concrete pad out front of City Hall that needs replacing. These issues can be paid for with SPLOST funds. A motion to proceed was made by Councilman Glenn Harris and a 2nd was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Guinn. The vote was unanimous.

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Fire Coordinator Eddie Moulton said that the fire department had run 9 calls last month. There were 3 vehicle accidents, with one of those being a fatality. They also had 1 vehicle fire and 1 structure fire. They had three service calls and set up the landing zone for a helicopter. He stated that it was extremely hot outdoors and they were trying to ensure everyone stays hydrated. He also said that there are several elderly people that the fire department is trying to keep a check on due to the heat.

Police Chief Jimmy Towns said that the police department had 182 calls last month with 36 citations being issued.

Executive Session:

A motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue was made by Councilman Chas Gassett and a 2nd was issued by Council Woman Deborah Williams. The vote was unanimous.

Regular Session:

Reprimand:

Stemming from the Executive Session Discussion it was determined that Attorney Joel Sherlock would write up a reprimand on Chief Towns based on issues that were discussed. A motion to proceed with the reprimand was made by Councilman Chas Gassett and a second was issued by Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Guinn. The vote was unanimous.

Hiring of Full Time Police Officer:

Per Chief Towns request to hire Officer Jared Willis to full-time status, a motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Guinn and a 2nd was issued by Councilman Glenn Harris. The vote was unanimous.

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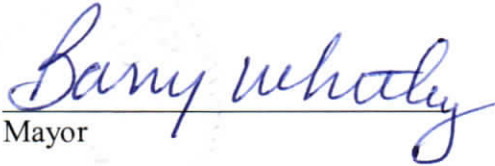
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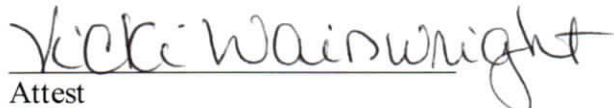
Council Meeting
July 11, 2017

Adjourn:

With no further discussions, a motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Guinn and a 2nd was issued by Councilman Glenn Harris. The vote was unanimous and the meeting was adjourned.



Mayor



Attest