

City of Butler

William B. Whitley,
Mayor
Joel V. Sherlock,
City Attorney
Vicki Wainwright,
Clerk

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Council:
Edward Guinn
Mayor, Pro-Tem,
Chas Gasset
Glenn Harris
Amanzie Jenkins
Deborah Williams

May 14, 2019 Council Meeting 7:00 PM

Present:

Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Guinn
Councilman Chas Gasset
Councilman Glenn Harris
Councilwoman Deborah Williams
Councilman Amanzie Jenkins
(Mayor Barry Whitley was out of town)

Media Present:

Flint Cable TV
Taylor County News

INVOCATION: Councilman Chas Gasset

OPENING STATEMENT: City Clerk Vicki Wainwright read the opening statement.

OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on April 9, 2019 and the Called Meeting from April 25, 2019 was made by Councilman Amanzie Jenkins and a 2nd was issued by Councilwoman Deborah Williams. The vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS:

Hotel/Motel Ordinance 1st Reading: City Attorney Joel Sherlock stated that this is step one of a two-part process to adopt a Hotel/Motel Ordinance for the City of Butler. This ordinance will encompass more than just the regular hotel/motel, it will also cover the smaller short period rentals, hunting cabins, basically anything that is rented for less than a 90-day period. Anything over 90 days is considered to be a permanent residence. Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn asked if this also covered VRBO, etc. Mr. Sherlock stated that that is a gray area, as the law is unclear when

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it comes to VRBO and Air B&B's. Arguably this ordinance should cover all of that as it is an overarching ordinance. The process for tonight is just like with the zoning ordinance but mercifully a lot shorter. We will go through a complete reading of the ordinance and any changes can be made and then we will come back for a second reading and at that time if the changes are acceptable and no other changes are needed, the Council can vote to adopt or not adopt.

He stated that this ordinance is essentially like a business license so the applicant for a hotel/motel license will have to come into City Hall and apply for a license and once that is approved they will be given a certificate, which then gives them the authority to collect taxes under the rule and then submit those taxes to the City of Butler. He stated that if you go over 5% then the City would have to get approval from the General Assembly. He said that the point of Hotel/Motel Tax is to promote tourism and things like that within the community. A portion of the funds (1% to 3%) can go into the City's General Fund, also to be used to promote tourism. Anything over that 3% is allocated that 40% of that tax must go to some organization that is set up within the community to specifically be used it for tourism, trade, etc. He stated that he believes that the City has that agreement with the Taylor County Chamber of Commerce. It must be a non-profit entity not run by the City of Butler. He said that he has been speaking with someone from DCA and they have gone over the rules and he gave him a good idea of what statute the City needs to use to get up to the 5%. He stated that that is what is before the Council tonight. This is set to create the tax, the rules for the tax, how people can get their application, how they pay their money, the penalties if they don't do so, or are fraudulent in paying their taxes.

City Clerk Vicki Wainwright read the Hotel/Motel Ordinance in its entirety.

After the reading, Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn asked what is the timeline? He was told that they could all take a copy of the ordinance home and read over it to see if there were any changes they would want to make. Mr. Sherlock said that he would like to know if anyone has any questions? It was determined that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council would be the 2nd reading and hearing for the Hotel/Motel Ordinance. It was stated that if the Hotel/Motel Ordinance is adopted in June, the levy would take place on July 1st. Mr. Sherlock asked if anyone had any questions regarding the license fee? Currently \$25.00 is the fee that is

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plugged into the ordinance, with a \$75.00 late application fee. Mayor Pro -Tem Guinn stated that he feels that fee is too low. City Clerk Vicki Wainwright stated that the City of Butler's regular business license is a base rate of \$100.00. Mr. Guinn stated that a hotel license should certainly be more than a regular business license. It was decided that the hotel/motel license fee would be \$150.00 with a late fee to be \$200.00. It was decided that the hotel/motel license would be due by January 1st of each year. Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn said that they would study over the ordinance and resume the discussion at the meeting next month.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Public Works Director David Windham said that the 100,000-gallon elevated water tank has been refurbished and completely painted inside and out and is back in operation. The 2017 CDBG Project that is being done over in the Ridge/Judge/Lee/Mason Street Area is about 45% complete. The Judge and Lee Street area was concentrated on heavily as it has the most connections in it. He said that he hopes that the street repair in that area will start in the next couple of weeks.

He announced that the Taylor County Commissioners held a meeting last week and voted to pay for the CODERED notification system county-wide. This system will take the place of the City of Butler's current notification system, Rapid Cast. CODERED does automatic severe weather notifications from the National Weather Service using the track and block system. We feel this will be a great asset to the County as a whole.

Fire Coordinator Eddie Moulton said that the Butler Fire Department ran 11 calls last month. There were two automobile accidents, one vehicle fire, assisted EMS one time, four alarm calls, two woods fire, and one structure fire. Butler Fire Department had five firefighters that finished the HazMat Ops Class. The Fire Department has a TIMS training class set up for May 21st and 22nd. The front of the fire station is being redone trying to get it ready for asphalt.

He asked for approval to pay Martin Marietta \$2814.60 for gravel out of the Public Safety SPLOST. A motion to pay Martin Marietta \$2814.60 was made by Councilman Chas Gasset and a second was made by Councilman Amanzie Jenkins.

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He also asked for a motion to allow him to surplus a 2011 Chevrolet patrol car. Councilman Amanzie Jenkins made a motion to surplus the patrol car and a second was made by Councilman Chas Gasset. The vote was unanimous.

Police Chief Kain Cobb said that for the month of April the Butler Police Department responded to 225 incidents. 114 of those were traffic stops, 36 domestic disputes, 6 assist motorists, 2 burglary/thefts, 4 alarm calls, 2 accidents, and there were 64 citations issued.

It was also announced that the City of Butler has hired Shaiqueta Brown as the new Utility Billing Clerk and Court Clerk. She started on May 13th and is doing an excellent job. We are glad to have her on board.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Lula Neal with Taylor County Family Connections announced that they have been awarded \$50,000 for the year, which also includes employee salaries and utilities. She also announced that their plan has been approved by the State of Georgia.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion to enter into an executive session to discuss litigation was made by Councilman Amanzie Jenkins and a second was made by Councilwoman Deborah Williams. The vote was unanimous.

REGULAR SESSION: (continued)

City Clerk Vicki Wainwright notified the Council that Paige Wainwright (Greg) had their baby on Saturday, May 11th and he (Maverick) weighed 1 lb. and 10oz but both mother and baby are doing good.

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ADJOURN:

With no other issues to discuss, a motion to adjourn from the Council Meeting was made by Councilman Amanzie Jenkins and a second was made by Councilman Glenn Harris. The vote was unanimous and the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Whitley

Attest