

WILLIAM B. WHITLEY  
Mayor  
JOHN B. "JACK" NICHOLS  
City Attorney  
VICKI WAINWRIGHT  
Clerk / City Administrator



COUNCIL:  
EDWARD GUINN  
Mayor, Pro Tem  
JACOB HOPKINS  
GLENN HARRIS  
RODRICK FLOWERS  
DEBORAH WILLIAMS

**April 21, 2026**  
**ReZoning Hearing : 5:30 PM**  
**Council Meeting @6:00 PM**  
**Council Chambers**

**PRESENT**

Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Guinn  
Councilperson Jacob Hopkins  
Councilperson Rodrick Flowers  
Councilperson Glenn Harris  
Councilperson Deborah Williams

**MEDIA PRESENT**

TC NEWS

**Rezoning Hearing:** Planning and Zoning Administrator Ashley Lawhorn introduced Ben Elbe with Low Country Housing Communities and Karsyn Wynn with Affordable Equity Partners, Inc., who were present because they have applied for rezoning for a property that is currently owned by the Taylor County Development Authority, which is Map and Parcel B53D 051, in the area of Railroad Street and MLK Jr. Road. The property is currently zoned SFRD (Single Family Residential) and they are asking it to be rezoned as MFR (Multi-Family Residential). They are proposing to purchase 18 acres of the Development Authority property with the intent of developing a multi-family development tentatively called "Butler Commons". The proposed development will be a 48-unit apartment complex, with 8 one-bedroom units, 20 two-bedroom units and 20 three-bedroom units. It will have a full clubhouse with a computer/business center, a fitness center and a covered picnic area.

Mr. Elbe stated that they chose the area because it is close to downtown amenities and near the schools. The area was also chosen because Butler, Reynolds and Taylor County are newly a part of the GICH (Georgia Initiative for Community Housing) program and have agreed to give a letter of support to the project for this year's submission to DCA for the tax credits program. Mr. Elbe said that there is also room on the proposed property for a potential phase two somewhere down the road if they see that the original project is doing well and if they see the market is there for additional apartments. He also informed the Council that Low Country will have to own the apartments for at least 10-15 years before any sale of the property could



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be done. The apartments will have to stay in the program through DCA for thirty years and will be under HUD and DCA oversight. He further stated that DCA puts a ton of oversight into this program and they or whoever owns it will have to maintain the program requirements for the 30-year term.

Karsyn Wynn stated that he has prepared an Urban Redevelopment Plan for the City of Butler. He said that in full disclosure this plan will help give them (the developers) points on the application to DCA, so it will help them, but the plan will also help the city. The plan can be used to help the city score points on other applications with the state moving forward and can be used to show the state that the city has a housing plan and a focus on the housing situation. He said that the plan can be changed or adapted as the city moves forward with completing its goals.

Mr. Wynn and Mr. Elbe were asked when they would know if they were awarded the project and what the project timeline will be and they stated that they feel that it could be September or October before the award notices are sent out. Then there will be some back and forth between them and DCA, and it could be January or February 2027 before they get the paperwork for the financing and be able to close on the land, then they would turn in all the necessary permits and hopefully around July they could start construction. The construction phase usually takes twelve months. The property should be ready to open in late summer or fall of 2028.

The Council asked if water and sewer are available on this property. They were informed that there is water available, but at this time the sewer is an unknown. The City's engineers are currently checking into the elevation, etc. Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn asked if they are aware there are areas of blight near the property. Mr. Elbe and Mr. Wynn said that there is blight in most towns in South Georgia, and they feel that this development can help get people into more



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quality housing. They have also found that the new development sometimes makes property owners clean their property up to make it look nice next to the new housing. It was noted that they plan to put ten to fourteen million dollars into this development, and they have seen substantial investments like this make a huge difference and improve the community. Mr. Elbe stated that the cost per unit is typically around \$215,000 to \$220,000. The one-bedroom units are typically 750-800 square feet, 900-950 square feet for a two-bedroom, and 1100 square feet for a three-bedroom. The clubhouse will typically be locked during non-business hours, with residents having a fob to enter. There will be a fob to enter the fitness area and computer center, but the manager's office will be locked after business hours. There will be cameras installed around the property as well for security purposes. He said that Fairway Management is very versed in the operations of the apartment complex. There will be three two-story buildings with a total of forty-eight units.



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**INVOCATION:** Council Member Jacob Hopkins gave the invocation and offered up prayers for the Whitley Family.

**OPENING STATEMENT:** Vicki Wainwright

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Approval of March 10th, 2026 Regular Council Meeting and March 24, 2026 Called Meeting:**  
A motion to approve the March 10<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting and the March 24<sup>th</sup> called meeting was made by Councilperson Deborah Williams and seconded by Councilperson Jacob Hopkins. The vote was unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Rezoning of Parcel B53D 051:** A motion to approve the rezoning of Parcel B53D 051 from SFRD to MFRD was made by Councilperson Glenn Harris and was seconded by Councilperson Rodrick Flowers. The vote to approve was unanimous.

**Urban Redevelopment Plan:** A motion to adopt the Urban Redevelopment Plan as presented along with all associated resolutions was made by Councilperson Jacob Hopkins and was seconded by Councilperson Glenn Harris. The vote to adopt was unanimous.

**SPLOST expense approval:** Public Works Director David Windham asked the Council to approve some police equipment purchase from public safety SPLOST for \$10,000 for equipment to bring the current unmarked police car up to standards to be a patrol car with a cage, radar, different lights, striping, etc. He said that he hopes the final cost will be less than \$10,000 but that it still to be determined. A motion to approve the purchase of the equipment to equip a patrol car from public safety SPLOST was made by Councilperson Jacob Hopkins and seconded by Councilperson Deborah Williams. The vote was unanimous.



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**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Public Works Director David Windham** reminded everyone that the Strawberry Festival will be held in Reynolds in the upcoming weekend, with events going on Friday night, April 24<sup>th</sup> and all day Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. Taylor County High School graduation will be Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> and Memorial Day is Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>. The office will be closed on that day. Tennis, Track and Baseball will have playoffs and regionals this week. He said that the city is extremely proud of all the athletes in Taylor County. He encouraged everyone that if they are available to go out and support them.

He said that the Downtown Sidewalk Project is nearly ready to be closed out. He has to meet with GDOT to handle a few issues and once those issues are addressed it should be 100% complete. He said that the water line rehab project is going well, with the majority of the water mains being laid by the middle of May. Once those are laid then they will start tying in the major connections from Roquemore to Chestnut. He also informed them that they have also started going back and repairing the driveways that have been cut, as well as some of the areas where they have had to cut the roads. He said that this project has to be completed and closed out by October 2026. The water meter lead service line project is about 90% complete as far as identifying and locating everything.

Councilperson Williams asked about the parking spaces around the courthouse because the spaces seem smaller and you have to back way out in the road to see around other cars. She was told that nothing had really changed, but those spaces are determined by GDOT specs.

In the absence of Fire Coordinator Brandon Maddox, Mr. Windham said that Mr. Maddox is testing firefighters on Skills. There are seven new firefighters being tested. He also informed the Council that the Butler Fire Department ran nineteen calls in March. Those calls were nine traffic accidents with injuries, seven wildland fires, one illegal or controlled burn, one heart problem call, and one service call.

**Assistant Chief Wallace Carpenter** said that the Butler Police Department answered three-hundred-seventy-seven occurrences in March, with two hundred and fourteen being traffic stops. There were twenty-two traffic accidents with five of those having injuries, sixty-one domestic calls with thirteen of them having injuries, three burglaries, six fires, two mental impairment calls, and five suicide threat calls.



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Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn told Mr. Carpenter that he and the rest of the Council appreciate his willingness to come work beside us and help the City of Butler during Chief Woodards absence.

Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn also said that he wants to give a huge thanks to the Taylor County Sheriff's Department, Taylor County Fire Department and the City of Reynolds Police Department for all that those entities have done today to help the City of Butler during the funeral of Mayor Barry Whitley. He said that Mayor Whitley's legacy was honored very well and it was greatly appreciated. He said that everyone can see all of us working together and it makes a difference.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Dr. Shirley Troutman came before the Council regarding a property that she owns that she allows family members to come to town and use from time to time. She had the water cut off, and when she came to get that water turned back on, she was told to pay a \$100.00 deposit. She also stated that she owns three properties with two of them being in Butler, and this concerns her. She said that putting up the deposit doesn't fit with her situation. It doesn't make sense to her, as this property was her mother's home and she did not miss a payment before her death in 2015. She said that since her mother's death, she herself has not missed one payment. This policy concerns her as a citizen and needs to be investigated. She requests that the \$100.00 be returned to her. She doesn't want to pay a water bill when nobody lives in the home but wants the water on if her brother comes to stay. She said someone may occupy the house for six months, or it may just be one week. She said no matter, if she gets a bill she will pay it.

Public Works Director David Windham said he could tell her what the ordinance states. He said that an active account pays a minimum bill which covers zero to two-thousand gallons. The City's ordinance does state that for every water application/active water account, there will be a \$100.00 deposit placed on that account. The deposit stays on that account until the account



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is closed out, at which time the final bill comes out of that deposit. If there are any funds left over from that deposit after the final bill, the customer will receive a refund for that amount.

The Council thanked Dr. Troutman for bringing this issue to them and stated that they would get back with her.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Mayor Pro-Tem Guinn announced that if there is no other business to discuss, the Council has a legal issue and a property issue that needs to be discussed in an Executive Session. A motion to enter an Executive Session was made by Councilperson Jacob Hopkins and was seconded by Councilperson Rodrick Flowers. The motion was unanimous.

**ADJOURN**

A motion was made by Councilperson Deborah Williams to adjourn and a second was made by Councilperson Jacob Hopkins. The vote was unanimous.

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Mayor Pro-Tem Austin E. Guinn

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ATTEST



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