

March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013

## City of Lake Park Call Meeting Minutes

City of Lake Park Call Meeting called to order by Mayor at 8:30 AM on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Those present were Mayor Schindler, Members Sherrill, Whitfield, and Lane, Police Chief Baker, and Clerks.

Member Whitfield made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel. Member Sherrill seconded. Member Lane opposed the motion. Motion approved at 8:35 AM.

Member Moss entered meeting after Council had gone into Executive Session.

Mayor and Council asked Mrs. Peterson to stay to take minutes due to the Attorney not being present. Mrs. Peterson did so until the Attorney arrived around 8:40 AM.

Mayor called regular meeting back to order at 9:20 AM.

Mayor asked Chief Tim Baker to come before Council. Mayor and Council asked Chief Baker to explain his policies and procedures. Council then questioned him regarding specific events, his Internship program, use and disbursement of police equipment, excessive mileage, and timely responses or not responding to calls, TAC certification requirements, and number of citations he had issued in previous 14 months. He was then asked to communicate to Council his opinion on his successes and failures or shortcomings of the previous year, and his desired objectives for 2013. He was also questioned as to his employment interview and hiring process. Council also asked if he would respond to questions concerning him previously serving as Water Supervisor along with the filing of state water reports, along with questions concerning his role in the fire department, he agreed. Chief Baker then gave his report of his assessment of the condition of the fire department concerning records, and public property as of January 2, 2012.

Member Lane asked if that covered everything on the list, Mayor stated not everything. Member Lane stated he would like to hear all questions that were on the list. Member Whitfield asked to be excused; Mayor announced a 5 minute recess, adjourned at 10:40 AM.

Meeting reconvened at 10:45 AM.

Mayor asked Chief Baker to come before Council again to complete the list of questions. Council questioned Chief Baker further regarding citizens' complaints of his speeding while in Police vehicle and the reason for doing so, establishing job duties and employment schedule for an officer that was not employed by the City of Lake Park without contacting Mayor or Council, failure to complete requested tasks, and transporting City Vehicle to another county without notifying active Mayor or Council.

Mayor asked if Council had any further questions. Member Whitfield made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel and Member Sherrill seconded. All in favor, motion passed, Council entered into Executive Session at 11:00 AM. Chief Baker asked if he needed to remain at City Hall and Council responded yes in case they had any further questions.

Everyone was excused from Council chambers.

Mayor called for Council to reconvene into regular session at 12:35 PM. Member Sherrill made a motion that Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem be responsible for signing the Executive Session Resolution and Affidavit. Member Whitfield seconded, all in favor. Motion passed.

Mayor called for an action from Council. Member Sherrill made a motion to hire Burt Rutland as a contract employee to serve as TAC Officer to handle filing TAC reports and other TAC duties at \$ 10.00 an hour with proof of his TAC Certification. Member Whitfield seconded. Mayor called for discussion. Member Whitfield stated that we first need to ask Mr. Rutland is he is interested. Mayor addressed Mr. Rutland and asked if he would be interested in the position as it was mentioned in the

motion. Discussion between Mr. Rutland, Mayor and Council ensued. Mayor asked if that offer was acceptable and Mr. Rutland stated not at this time. Member Sherrill stated that she wanted withdraw her motion.

Member Lane made a motion to ask Lowndes County Sheriff's office to assist the City of Lake Park in getting up to date on their TAC responsibilities. Member Moss seconded. Member Lane further stated that it was necessary for the City to move forward. Mayor included that Mayor and Council should keep in close contact with the recommended process to get the City of Lake back on schedule. When question called, all members in agreement, motion passed.

Mayor asked for Clerk to contact County Sheriff's office regarding assistance with TAC services and Reports.

Member Sherrill made a motion for Member Whitfield to work along with the Mayor to establish a revised work schedule for the Lake Park Police Officers on an interim basis. For lack of a seconded, the motion failed.

Member Whitfield made a motion to move Chief Baker to a patrol officer. Member Sherrill seconded. Member Lane stated regarding the demotion of Chief Baker, he felt that it was Mayor and Council's responsibility just as much so as it was Chief Baker's for the case of the department's realignment. Mayor called for a vote. Members Whitfield and Sherrill for it, Members Lane and Moss oppose. Motion was a tie. Mayor voted in favor, broke the tie, motion passed.

Member Whitfield suggested the immediate advertisement for Chief of Police with specific qualifications. He also stated the need of a work session to discuss what qualifications they want in a candidate, expected job duties, and expectations.

Member Sherrill suggested that the Clerk research on GMA website to get some specifics used for searching for a Police Chief.

Mayor asked Council about a Call Meeting for Monday March 11, since there had been one already posted as an "if needed" meeting. Council discussed and decided to go ahead with Call Meeting on Monday March 11 2013 but to change the time to 7:30 PM, to discuss personnel.

Mayor asked Clerk to contact Lowndes County dispatch to request the City of Lake Park's dispatch reports for the previous 12 months, in PDF file if possible. Also to contact Sheriff's Department regarding their assistance in covering the school zone crossing during the morning hours.

Member Sherrill made a motion to cancel the Call Meeting posted for March 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 A.M. Member Moss seconded the motion, all in favor, motion passed.

Member Sherrill made a motion to allow David Brown and Michael Hickman to speak before Council. Motion seconded by Member Moss, all in favor, motion passed.

Mayor called Mr. Brown up to address Council. Mr. Brown thanked the Council for allowing him to stand up and be heard. He stated that he had not had the opportunity to represent himself when accusations had been made about him and his duties or practices as former Fire Chief. Mr. Brown stated I am here to answer any questions that you might have for me, I have done nothing wrong and I have nothing to hide.

Mayor and Members of Council questioned Mr. Brown regarding statements and accusations that had been made by the former Chief of Police Tim Baker. Those questions regarded accusations that Mr. Brown had destroyed computer programs, documents, files, and other equipment that was owned by the City of Lake Park Fire Department. Questions also regarded inventory of equipment, state and local fire reports and to whom those reports were filed with, and fire department personnel records and the whereabouts of that equipment, reports, and records.

Following the conversation with Mr. Brown, Member Sherrill stated she wanted to go on record saying Mr. Brown did a great job as Fire Chief and wants his statements and answers to go on file.

Mayor thanked Mr. Brown for his time and for coming in to make the statements on his behalf.

Mayor called on Michael Hickman to come up and address the Council. Mr. Hickman stated that in his Cemetery Committee Member's opinion, the cost of cemetery plots should be increased with the approval of Mayor and Council. Member Lane stated that Council had frozen the sale of certain plots during a recent Council Meeting due to lack of equipment accessibility. Mr. Hickman stated in his opinion there is no way to service those plots in question with equipment. He further stated that an adjoining property owner, Mr. Mitch Cothran was agreeable to owner financing, if the City chose to purchase additional property for the Cemetery from him. Mr. Hickman asked Mayor and Council to approach Mr. Mitch about the property for the purpose of expanding and restructuring the cemetery. Member Lane asked if Mr. Hickman was asking Council to purchase property, figure a layout for expanding or restructuring the plots, and to calculate a rate to sale those plots for to help pay for the expense of the additional land and perpetual care.

Member Moss asked if the Cemetery Committee had discussed/or arrived at a new cost for a grave site. Mr. Hickman stated he would suggest \$500-\$800 for city residents and \$900-\$1350 for non-residents. Member Sherrill asked if the committee had actually met and discussed this rate increase. Mr. Hickman advised they had not met but hey had discussed the issue by phone. Mayor asked if Mr. Hickman would be available to attend the next Council Meeting, Mr. Hickman said no but he would attempt to get Mrs. Asbell to come and represent the Cemetery Committee.

Mayor asked that the Cemetery Committee and issues be added to the April Agenda.

Being no further action, Member Sherrill made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Member Moss seconded, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM

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Read and Approved

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Date