



120 North Essa Street, Lake Park, Georgia 31636
City Hall 229-559-7470
Fax 229-559-7499

City of Lake Park Regular Meeting
April 5, 2022
6:00 PM

Agenda

Welcome, Invocation, and Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes – March 8th Regular Meeting, and March 28th Work Session

Financials – March

Citizens' Concerns

Department Reports
 Administrative
 Fire
 Maintenance
 Police

Update on Broadway – Elevation Report

Cemetery Update

Digital City Hall Sign

July 4th Celebration

Rezoning Request – William Brady

Lake Dogs Alcohol License Request

BIS Update

City Vehicles

Time Clock

City Employees

Committee Seat Vacancies
 Ethics – 3
 Cemetery – 4
 BOZA – 5
 MPO - 1
 Planning Commission- 1

Beautification Project

Citizens' Concerns

Executive Reports

Tuesday April 19th Lake Park Municipal Court @ 6:00 PM
Friday April 15, 2022 City Hall Close in observance of Good Friday
Monday April 25th Work Session @ 6:00 PM

*Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or the facilities are required to contact the ADA Coordinator at 229-559-7470 promptly to allow the city to make reasonable accommodations for those persons.



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City of Lake Park Regular Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2022
6:00 PM

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called the meeting to order and lead off with an invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present were as follows; Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith, Council Members Ronald Carter, Michelle Lane, and June Yeomans, and Clerk Fowler. Also present were Fire and Maintenance Supervisor David Brown, Officer Benefield, and citizens.

Pro Tem Griffith called for review of the minutes of March 8th Regular Meeting, and March 28th Work Session. Member Carter made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Member Lane second. When question called Members Carter and Lane in favor, Member Yeomans opposed, motion passed.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of the March financials. Member Yeomans questioned when the amendments would be completed; Clerk Fowler stated when the auditor is finished with audit. Member Carter made a motion to approve the financials, Member Lane second. When question called Members Carter and Lane in favor, Member Yeomans opposed, motion passed.

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for Citizens' Concerns, there were none.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of department reports.

Administrative – skipped

Fire Chief and Maintenance Supervisor David Brown came forward to give the fire and maintenance reports. (See attached) He stated that the fire hydrant located near 605 Broadway had been hit and damaged. He went on to say that Killeen, who had previously done repairs to hydrants, had stated he could repair it for less than \$1,000. Member Carter made a motion to approve Killeen to repair the hydrant, Member Yeomans second, all in favor motion passed.

Brown gave an update on the cemetery fence project and stated that it should be completed sometime next week.

Brown went on to advise Council that maintenance was still in need of a back pack blower and pole saw. He reported that there were approximately 6 trees on city right of ways, at this time that they felt dangerous and needed to be cut. He only had one bid submitted and that was from Appex and the amount to do the job was \$18,000. Brown said that the fireworks had been purchased, picked up, and stored for safe keeping until the July 4th Celebration. He also reported that one of the maintenance employees had busted a house window on Essa Street while mowing recently. A rock flew out from the mower and busted the out pane of a double pane window. Brown has already contacted a glass company to have the repair done.

Member Carter made a motion to allow the purchase of a new blower, Member Yeomans second, all in favor motion passed. Member Carter made a motion to allow the purchase of a new pole saw and stated that if the quoted price had increased that he would add an additional \$50 for the purchase. Member Yeomans second the motion, all in favor motion passed.

Police Officer Benefield came forward to fill in for Chief Kinsey's and give the police department report. See attached.

Clerk Fowler asked if she could give the Administrative report at this time, Member Griffith agreed. Clerk Fowler approached Council and gave her report on behalf of the administrative department. See attached.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for update on Broadway. Member Yeomans asked if an elevation report had been received. Member Yeomans asked if she should make a motion to have an elevation report done or let it die, Member Griffith stated let it die. No action taken.
Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for cemetery update. Update presented during department reports, no action taken.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of digital city hall sign. Clerk Fowler stated that she had included copies of requests that she had submitted for sign bids and stated that no one had submitted bids at this time, other than the previous two that have been reviewed. No action taken.

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review July 4th Celebration. Member Lane gave an update on fireworks, sound person, and vendor registrations. Chief Brown stated he would get started on the fireworks permit. No action taken.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of the rezoning request from William Brady. Clerk Fowler stated that the request had been submitted to the Planning Commission but she didn't have the recommendation report. Member Carter made a motion to approve the rezoning request upon the approval of the Planning Commission, Member Lane second, all in favor motion passed.

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of Lake Dogs alcohol license request. Clerk Fowler explained that with new Georgia alcohol guidelines that the city was required to obtain an ORI number specifically for alcohol license request. She went on to state that the number had been requested, processed, and approved last week. Fowler explained that Clerk Martinez had completed the required training for processing the request and now they were just waiting on the completed back ground check and fingerprinting. No action taken.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for the BIS update. Clerk Fowler stated that she had submitted the approval by Council and the system is scheduled to be installed over a two day period beginning May 24th, 2022. No action taken.

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of agenda item city vehicles. No discussion and no action.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of the time clock. Member Carter stated that a time clock had been discussed before and that it was voted to not get one. Member Griffith stated that a previous Council Member had stated he had been in favor of a time clock. Member Carter replied that the Council was tied and Mayor Sandlin had to split the decision. Brown asked who all would be required to use the time clock, even department heads. He went on to ask if he was called out for a water line break in the middle of the night, would he have to come to city hall to clock in before he went to repair the line and then return to clock out. Member Griffith stated yes. Clerk Fowler stated that during previous discussion about time clocks, it was also asked about police officers who sign on from their patrol cars once they enter the city, would they still be required to clock in? What if they receive a call once they are signed on but have not clocked in, do they clock in before answering the call? Member Griffith explained that in that case the officer would take the call and then come to clock in and make a notation on the time card of actual on duty time. Member Griffith stated to move on. No action taken.

Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of agenda item city employees. No discussion and no action.

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of the committee seat vacancies.

Ethics Committee

Mayor Appointee – Debbie Sauls

Council Appointee – Thomas Hager

Member Yeomans made a motion to appoint Thomas Hager, Member Carter second, all in favor motion passed.

Mayor/Council Appointee - Gloria Luke

Member Yeomans made a motion to appoint Gloria Luke, Member Carter second, all in favor motion passed.

Cemetery

Committee members were discussed, no action taken

Board of Zoning Appeals

Committee members were discussed, no action taken

Planning Commission

Committee members were discussed, no action taken

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for review of the beautification project. The improvement suggestions were discussed. Member Yeomans made a motion to purchase 4 Welcome to Lake Park signs from SPLOST VIII Streets and Roads, she went on to include 15 pole banners and the palm trees to be paid for from the General Fund, Member Lane second all in favor motion passed.

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for Citizens' Concerns, there were none.

Pat Brown, 809 Main Street, came before Council and asked that Carl Taylor join her. She stated that the Odd Fellow cemetery was in agreement with the Lake Park cemetery beautification.

Pro Tem Oscar Griffith called for Executive reports. Member Griffith stated he wouldn't be available for the Work Session on Monday April 25th. After discussion, Council agreed to change the Work Session date to Tuesday April 26, 2022 at 9:00 AM.

Member Lane asked for Council to consider raising the spending limit from \$500 to \$2,000 without Council approval. After discussion, Member Lane made a motion to increase spending limit to \$2,000 before needing Council approval for purchases, Member Yeomans second, all in favor motion passed.

Member Yeomans made a motion to adjourn, Member Lane second, motion passed.

Read & approved Jakatha Fauler Date 5-4-22

Council Fire Report for March

Fire Calls 4 so far

1 structure fire that mutual aid with Echols County

1 Assist EMS in the city

2 grass/trash fires in the city

Station Needs

None

Truck needs

Still no quotes on replacing the rear end on Tanker 2

Equipment needs

None

Grants

No updates

Lake Park City Council Monthly Maintenance Report for March

Service calls

We continue to repair a few broken water lines going to the houses on Main street this is a result of the new main water line being installed and the fact that the city does not have plans or blueprints on existing lines.

Maintance needs – We need back pack blower and Pole saw both are in short supply for brand we use (STIHL) cost for back pack blower is 659.99 located in Tallahassee the pole saw is 689.99 because these items are on back order stores would not send a printed quote

Work accomplished – We continue to work with the contractor doing our best to locate any unknown water lines on Main Street and repair them if needed

Cemetery update – Fence Contractor is working on installing new fence on the back side of the cemetery

Lake Park Police Department

March 2022 Report

Calls For Service: 137

Welfare Check: 2	Domestic with weapons: 3	Domestic without weapons:3
Traffic: 74	Warrants Served: 2	Trespassing: 3
Suspicious Vehicles: 2	Suicide Attempts: 2	Robbery Alarm: 1
Pursuits: 3	Patrol Check Requested: 2	Harassment: 1
Open Door at Business: 1	Fraud: 1	Disabled Vehicles: 2
Burglar Alarms: 10	Burglary: 1	Animal Complaint: 1
Accident :5	Medical:1	

Lake Park Police got a couple of thank you's from other agencies last month.

One from when Officers got an alert from the tag reader that a vehicle was approaching with a stolen tag on it. Officers attempted to stop the vehicle and a pursuit ensued. After about a 12 mile pursuit it ended about a mile from where it started. Lake Park Officer noticed a pistol dropped by the offender as he was running from his vehicle. The area was surrounded by Lake Park Officers and Lowndes County Deputies and an arrest was made.

Several agencies from Florida including the US Marshall's Office contacted Lake Park Police to advise the person arrested was a violent felon that they had been trying to find for the past six months. The Marshalls Office thanked the Police Department saying it had been difficult because he was always changing license plates on his car. The pistol recovered was stolen from a police agency who called to say thank you as well.

Lake Park Police received a tip that a violent felon wanted in several states may be staying in Lake Park. Officers observed the house for a couple of days to verify a matching description. Lake Park Police contacted the Sheriff's Office for assistance to because of the offender's violent behavior. Entry was made into the home and an arrest was made.

Colonial Bag contacted the Police Department about a fraud that was over \$12,000.00

Officers developed a suspect within two days, officers are taking warrants..

April 2022 Administrative Report

First of all, I'm up here to report and give some clarification, from the administrative side, to some of the recent statements made regarding city business, citizens, and employees.

1. The Cemetery

The account given regarding the cemetery fence was very misleading. There is documentation to show the ongoing problems with trucks causing damage to the cemetery fence, monument, and even to graves. There are Council Meeting minutes and Cemetery Committee minutes that date back to 2014 that reference fence damage done by trucks leaving it in disrepair, an access gate, and problems with citizens using the dumpster for their personal garbage. All these factors and more have been considered when discussing the idea of a new fence being needed.

2. Christmas Parade

The 2021 Christmas Parade was not held because of the continuing COVID restrictions. It was discussed and Council decided to do tree lighting only for public safety. It was not because there was no money for it.

3. Created Job

The job that was announced as a created job was from a department restructuring. A part time employee was brought on as full time and was set in a supervisory role due to his experience and state certifications. That department as a whole was discussed in executive session, as personnel should be. If you would like more information regarding that topic I would advise Council to go into an executive session to properly discuss it.

4. New Council trying to do things right.

It was also mentioned that the new Council was trying to do things right, which to me implies that other Council was doing things wrong. I have worked in this position for almost 10 years now, and there have been several Council Members come and go in that time. I've worked with many that were a pleasure to work with and some that seem to be a curse. But in my position, one of my job duties is to advise Council, especially new Council. I have told everyone in my time here that I am here to help and answer questions. Openness, accountability, and honesty define government transparency. It is a government's obligation to share information with citizens. It is at the heart of how citizens hold their public officials accountable. . I'm not saying you're not doing things right, but the way you are going about things is not right.

5. Railroad Crossings

The railroad crossings were mentioned previously and that old Council wanted to close them. Mayor Sandlin was actually approached by Norfolk Southern about closing those crossings in October of 2020. He brought the information to Council and records show that no Council person was in favor of doing so. In order to close out and tie up loose ends, previous Council actually decided to hold a public hearing to let Norfolk Southern come and speak to the citizens and explain what and why they wanted to close those crossings and allow the citizens to have input in the discussion.

Now to clear up any confusion to more of the statements made on and after the March 8, 2022 Regular Council Meeting.

The employee leave request form was put into place around June of 2021. Employees were to fill out the request, submit to their department head, which would then submit it to me. Both Mayor Sandlin and Mr. Carter asked that I keep them updated on upcoming leaves and I did either when they came to the office to discuss city business or by phone call, neither of which you have done. Neither of which you have attempted to do. You don't know about anyone's leave or days off because you haven't asked. I have told everyone including you on many occasions to let me know if you have any questions about anything I have submitted. I am unaware of what you know that's actually going on at city hall if you don't communicate with me. And communication is something that you have not done. If you don't communicate and ask questions, you won't ever be informed. I explained this and offered my help in an email sent to you and Member Lane on January 5, 2022. The day after you were sworn in on Council and the day after you were appointed Mayor Pro Tem. We met on Wednesday January 12th at 9:00 AM and even Member Yeomans attended. I have the emails to confirm this if you would like a copy.

The comment of "us" running gun and doing what we want to do makes no sense to me at all. First off I didn't know what running gun meant so I did as you suggested and looked it up in the dictionary. The Cambridge dictionary states that the definition for running gun is the activity of bringing guns and other weapons into a country illegally, especially for use against the government. Now I can assure you that I am NOT running gun and to my knowledge no other employees are either. Now the comment that we do what we want to do is not true either. Every employee with the City of Lake Park accounts for their time with time sheets. Those sheets are submitted to the department head for verification and then to me. Copies of those timesheets are always made available for whoever is signing checks. So rest assured that I know I didn't throw anything at you as you stated in a previous meeting.

Member Griffith, you did not request to add anything to the agenda and there was nothing about me or any other employee listed to be discussed. However you announced

several statements regarding personnel. Specifically the phone call you said you received concerning me. You discussing personnel matters in an open forum was not only unethical it was incorrect, misleading, and uncalled for. Let's not forget that you completed an employee questionnaire and gave me a good reference for the position that I was being considered for on February 2, 2022. You knew about that position a long time before you received that phone call. I did not go to Member Lane she came to me. She came to me! The first time she came to me I told her I wouldn't stay here because I don't like the direction that this Council is going. I don't like the way that you have brought turmoil and discontent to the city, employees and specifically me with your actions in and out of the public eye. I explained that working for and with people that I don't trust and respect is something that I don't want to do. The second time I was asked, I specifically stated that I was concerned with Council wanting to get rid of the police and fire departments and that I feared my job would be next. You all have discussed downsizing departments, cutting jobs, ruining careers, and costing those employees ways to support their family.

When I asked you why you put my personal business out in public Member Yeomans stated because everyone needs to know. First of all everyone doesn't NEED to know about my personal conversation with a Council Member. Because if that's the case then there are several conversations that Member Yeomans and I have had that everyone needs to know, most recently the one about the Lowndes County Sheriff's agreement that was submitted to me by the Sheriff himself. How about the conversations or texts messages between you Council Members, I know firsthand that there are several that everyone needs to know. If you as a Council want to put it all out there on the table, we can do that, no problem. Being an elected official you take an oath. That oath states that you will "well and truly perform the duties of (Mayor or councilman) of the City and support and defend the Charter thereof, as well as the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and of the United States of America." Well included in the City of Lake Park Charter, there is an Ethics Ordinance which states the governing authority establishes ethical standards with respect to the conduct of the members of the governing authority in situations where a conflict may exist. It also states members of the governing authority shall not disclose confidential information gained by their official position, nor shall they use such information for their personal gain or benefit. That of which you have violated.

You see, before several of you decided to violate my rights as an employee, I would never in a million years thought of airing your business, but at this point I feel like I have no other choice. You have disrespected me and questioned my integrity and ability to do my job not only in your actions but also in your words during several public meetings. Since everyone needs to know, I want to remind every one of you that has questions or concerns about city business, employees, and even City Council, you can get the actual facts and answers through open records request.