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City of Lake Park  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
July 2, 2024  
6:00 pm

**Members present** were Mayor Jena Sandlin, Council Member Oscar Griffith, Council Member Michelle Lane, Council Member Busby Courson, and Council Member Carl Spano

**Staff Present:** City Clerk Lisa Johnson, Deputy Clerk Christian Crews, Fire Chief Matt Ryan, Police Chief Ed Yarbrough, Maintenance Supervisor-In-Training Kaleb Rogers

Mayor Jena Sandlin called the meeting to order.

Council Member Oscar Griffith led the invocation.

Mayor Jena Sandlin led the pledge.

**Minutes:** Mayor Sandlin called for the review and approval of the Minutes of the June 4, 2024 Regular Council Meeting and the May 30, 2024 Public Hearing. Council Member Michelle Lane made a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 4, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes, and the May 30, 2024 Public Hearing. Council Member Oscar Griffith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Mayor Sandlin called for Citizens who have concerns they would like to bring to the Council's attention.

**Citizen Concerns:**

- Ronnie Sauls - 1100 W Marion Ave - Stated that he thinks everyone is doing a great job and the Independence Day celebration was great. He stated a concern that the Community Service guys are not working - he sees them riding around on the gator and there is a lot of weed-eating to be done.
- Dock Wade - 106 Pine Circle - noted improvement in cleanup during the Mayor's term. He is concerned about the lot across the road from him. He has killed two snakes from the property and is asking the Council to address the issue.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS/DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

**Fire Department:** Matt Ryan

- Presented a monthly call report
- Stated that he is planning a CPR course for the Fire Department and would like to invite Council and staff to participate; he will need a count by mid-July.
- Stated that he has two students going in for volunteer certification.
- Stated that he needs pest control for spiders at the Fire Station.
- Stated that he needs trash pickup at the Fire Station.

- Council Member Michelle Lane thanked Chief Ryan for setting off the fireworks for the Independence Day celebration
- Mayor Sandlin added that everyone's efforts for the celebration were appreciated, and that everyone had done a good job.

**Police Department:** Chief Ed Yarbrough

- Presented a monthly call report.
- Reported that new legislation has mandated that the City needs to keep Narcan on-hand, and he is setting up training and working on getting Narcan for the office.

**Maintenance/Public Works Department:** Kaleb Rogers

- Presented activity report.
- Cleaned up at Tom's Pond
- Completed set up and cleanup from Independence Day celebration
- Have been doing a lot of mowing, weed eating and edging, and picking up trash on the side of the roads, especially around the welcome to Lake Park signs.
- Trimmed a lot of trees off the fence at Sandy Bottom, and have been picking up limbs
- Have been flushing hydrants
- Have been watering palm trees, noted lack of rain
- The tree at the Civic Center has been taken down and the stump ground.

**Administration:** City Clerk Lisa Johnson

- Gave an update on software and IT updates
- Stated that there are two Ordinances for reading later on the Agenda; the first is a regular update to the Agreement with our Retirement system, which has to be adopted by Ordinance, and the second is a change to the Municipal Insurance License fees, which must change to be compliant with State Law as the City's 2020 final Census numbers were certified at less than 1,000 people.
- Reported that Cindy Mitchell, Court Clerk in the City of Nashville had come to Lake Park to work with Melissa Morey to help update our knowledge base for Court, and that Christian Crews will be scheduled for Clerk's Mandated Training in September.
- Reported that a new bill that passed this year, HB 581, is expected to go before voters in November. This bill provides an opportunity for a FLOST (Floating Local Option Sales Tax) that would allow cities to decrease their millage rates, which could be a huge help in the face of sharply increasing property values.
- Reported that the FY23 Audit report had been received, and forwarded to Council, and that she had a meeting set up with the auditors to go over some questions she had. The auditor will be at the August meeting to present and answer any questions the Council may have.
- Reported that there are several Public Works projects ongoing that are awaiting engineering information to be able to move forward. Of particular concern is the Lead Service Line Replacement project, as its deadlines for completion in October, and missing the deadline may result in loss of the grant that will fund the project. The Clerk and the Mayor have a meeting set up with the Engineer to discuss these issues.
- Reported that she has been in touch with Municode and has a meeting upcoming to discuss the City's contract and updates to the online Code.
- Reported that Kaleb has just returned from Water Operator training. There is a test that he will need to take and will need to work under the direct supervision of a certified operator for a specified amount of time before he is fully certified.

- Council Member Spano stated that he had attended the last Court date and noted that the Probation Officer appeared unprofessional and distracted and stated that the City may want to review the contract and performance.
- Council Member Spano expressed concern regarding the Lead Line Service Replacement and made a motion to authorize the City Clerk with the Mayor's consent to determine and take any necessary steps to engage a different engineer, if necessary, in order to complete the project within the required time frame. Council Member Michelle Lane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

**Financial Reports:** City Clerk Lisa Johnson

- Reported that to date, all departments were operating within their budgets, excepting the \$92,000 that has been spent for Hurricane Idalia projects, which is reimbursable from FEMA. Revenues are exceeding their projections.
- Reported that reimbursement is expected soon, and that the funds have been obligated. The only project that has not yet been fully through the process is the Category Z, which is Administrative Costs.
- Asked if Council had any questions or concerns regarding the reports presented from the new software; there were none stated.
- Mayor Sandlin asked Council Member Spano if he had anything to add as Budget Officer:
  - Council Member Spano reported that he and the City Clerk had met with all of the Department Heads in preparation for the FY25 Budget, and that all requests are reasonable. He would like to add in a 3% Cost of Living Increase for all employees. The Police Chief would like to expand his part-time position to a full-time position; this would be part of an overall plan to rebuild to a 24/7 department. There is a possibility that the remaining ARPA funds can be obligated to Police Department personnel, and the City Clerk will be investigating this; it does have to be noted that this would only cover the initial increase, and the City would need to be able to fund it through other means after that. The tentative goal is to have a draft budget by the end of the month, so that Council can be prepared for setting the millage rate in August.
- Council Member Carl Spano made a motion to accept the Financial Reports as stated. Council Member Michelle Lane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

**New Business:**

**Ordinance Updates:**

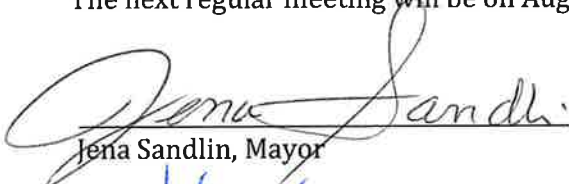
- Mayor Sandlin presented the update to the GMEBS agreement, which has to be adopted by ordinance. This is the Georgia Municipal Employment Benefits Services, which represents our Employee Retirement Benefits; most of the changes are due to updated legislation and are required by the IRS.
  - Council Member Spano asked if there had to be two readings to update an existing Ordinance. City Clerk Lisa Johnson stated that it has to be restated twice and available to the public for review.
  - Council Member Busby Courson asked if we could put this on the website; Mrs. Johnson affirmed and stated that there would also be copies in the office for residents who wanted to see them there.
  - Council Member Busby Courson made a motion to adopt the updated agreement. Council Member Carl Spano seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0
- Mayor Sandlin presented the updated Municipal License Fees Ordinance, explaining that the Ordinance had been updated following the preliminary Census numbers which showed Lake Park's population to be over 1,000, which allowed an increase from \$15 to \$25. Final Census numbers show


the City's population to be just under 1,000; under Georgia Law, this means that the maximum the City can collect for these fees is \$15 each, and so the Ordinance needs to be updated to be in compliance with that law. This Ordinance would go into effect January 1, 2025. Council Member Oscar Griffith made a motion to adopt the Ordinance to revise Insurance License fees in accordance with Georgia law. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

- Mayor Sandlin asked Council for consideration of amending the office hours at City Hall to begin at 8:30, rather than 8:00 to allow staff time to review the day's workflow and any training or instructions necessary without interruptions. Council Member Lane expressed concern that regular traffic between 8:00 and 8:30 am might indicate that this was the best time for residents to be able to come into the office, and that opening later might present difficulties for those residents. The suggestion was made and accepted that Administrative Staff monitor traffic during the proposed times to better evaluate the need.
- Mayor Sandlin stated that the City needs a new flag pole at City Hall and the Cemetery needs a new flag. Council Member Spano noted that the flag pole also needs a light. City Clerk Lisa Johnson stated that there are new flags at City Hall for the Cemetery and City Hall.
- Mayor Sandlin stated that she would like to replace palm trees that were destroyed in the storm. Council Member Oscar Griffith asked for quotes for the flag pole and the trees.
  - Council Member Busby Courson asked if the fountains at the pond are on a schedule; Mayor Sandlin responded that they had been left on for the Independence Day celebration, and that the fountain normally operates on a timer from 7am to 12 noon and from 7 pm to 11 pm.
  - Council Member Carl Spano asked that we remember to properly retire old flags.

Council Member Busby Courson made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Michelle Lane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

The next regular meeting will be on August 6, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

  
Jena Sandlin, Mayor  
8/6/2024  
Date

  
Lisa Johnson, City Clerk  
August 6, 2024  
Date

Seal