

City of Santa Claus, Georgia

Regular Monthly Council Meeting, June 16, 2020

Mayor Amy Lawler called the meeting to order. Present were Council members, Donita Bowen, Tad Bryant, Monte Powell and David Evans and Sue Grisham. The Mayor led the Pledge Allegiance to the flag to open the meeting. The agenda was approved with Tad making a motion second by Monte to accept the agenda. Sue read the minutes for the May 19, 2020 meeting. A motion was made by Tad second by Donita to accept minutes as read with a showing of hands that it was unanimous.

A copy of balances for all bank accounts for the City of Santa Claus were reported to the Council by Amy for their review. These were discussed.

Tad said Sweet Onion Landscaping checked the 139 lights at the walkways at the Gardens and will further check on the replacement of the faulty lights and will get back to Amy on this project. At this time, the Charters of Freedom wall discussed for erection in the city is on hold due to a possible \$10,000.00 solicitation fee required by the state of Georgia, Amy stated. This would be an educational, non-profit project. Representatives have stated the project may be pulled from the state of Georgia due to the extreme fee. Sue stated that Eddie Wright, City Manager, had called the office to offer assistance to Tad if he needs it for the Gardens grounds, sprinklers, hinges on gates, etc. Tad will need to call Eddie if a need arises.

Amy informed Council that J.B. Dykes has replaced the ceiling fans at the Pavilion. She added that sweeps need to be added to the bottom of the bathroom doors at the site to keep out dirt and debris that blows under the doors.

Donita and Amy stated they have done extensive cleaning on the ice machine at the Community Center to assure safety from contamination. Two chairs for the tables have been test cleaned showing the faded cushions on some may come apart if cleaned. Council agreed all chairs need to be cleaned with replacing any damaged chairs if needed.

David reported that he is waiting to hear back from Ivy Toole on the Rudolph Way problem. Amy said that McLendon Enterprises has scraped off the shoulders on U.S. # 1 north of the 11 Holly St residence hoping to alleviate the flooding the residence suffers from heavy rains. After a heavy rain, the results of the scraping will be reported. David also reported he has been cleaning up debris in and around the city work area on S. Noel ST.

Republic Services rep., Ivan Figueroa, stopped in the office and chatted with Amy. He asked what would help his company need to offer to continue the city's contract with Republic. Amy said, in the past, residents have requested a curb side pickup for yard debris and that would be a great service to the city. The Republic Services contract with the city has expired & bids will be taken for future city garbage pickup.

After riding around the city, Amy has observed that all residents do not have the house number on the dwelling. Some are located on the mailbox at curb side. It is a requirement by 911 for the house to have easily read numbers on the house for emergency personnel in case of a 911 call for medical or fire calls. Amy asked Sue to insert a letter to all residents in the next water bill envelope stating that all house numbers should show on the house for this purpose.

Amy stated that the new website for the city was not operating properly and asked that Sue add again the question on the letter to be inserted in the water bills whether or not residents will use credit card payments for their water bill payments on line. Amy added that the Chevy S-10 truck bidding has closed and that Willie Gillis awarded the sale for \$300.00. Sue stated that another party inquired for the purchase of the truck offering \$400.00. Mr. Gillis will be allowed the purchase as he won the bid in the allocated time but would default after 7/31/20.

The SPLOST passed on the ballot for the 1% sales tax to remain for Toombs County. This is good news for the city as we will continue to receive a portion of the taxes. Amy added that she is searching for a C.P.A. to perform audits for the city as there has not been a completed state certified audit for the past 6 years. Amy has been informed by some municipalities that an audit could cost as much as \$39,000.00 per year. Due to the state not receiving a certified audit, the city is not in compliance and is not eligible for grants for roads, sewer, playgrounds, etc. This was discussed at length. Amy suggested the C.P.A. fee be covered from money market account as there is a balance of \$173,000.00 in that account. David made a motion second by Tad for Amy to use the money market account to cover the fee of a C.P.A. for the city audit. All voted in favor of this action by a show of hands and for Amy to hire a firm to do the audit if it is less than \$39,000.00.

Mold on the Gift Shop wall has been caused by a leak in the roof, Amy stated. Clarence Pittman gave a price of \$425.00 to replace the damaged wall. Tad made a motion second by Monte to hire Mr. Pittman for this project with all in favor. He also gave a price of \$400.00 to seal the bottom of the City Hall exterior wall and repair the water damage on the baseboards in the meeting room. Monte made a motion second by Donita passing unanimously to Mr. Pittman to do the repairs on the City Hall for \$400. Amy added the roof has been repaired at no cost to the city.

Amy informed that a photographer has taken some pictures of the city and will return for more pictures of the Community Center to be used for the website.

Amy presented an "Assumption of Risk" for the Covid-19 to be signed by any renter of the Community Center to protect the city from any liability. This would be in addition to the rental contract at the same time. Tad made a motion second by Monte with all in favor of this document with a show of hands.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Amy Lawler, Mayor \_\_\_\_\_



City of Santa Claus, Georgia

Regular Monthly Council Meeting, August 18, 2020

Mayor Amy Lawler was in California with her ill mother but was present on speaker phone. Mayor Pro-tem Tad Bryant called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Donita Bowen and Monte Powell and Sue Grisham. Councilman David Evans was out of town. Tad led the Pledge Allegiance to the flag to open the meeting. Sue read the minutes for the June 16, 2020 meeting. A motion was made by Monte second by Donita to accept minutes as read with a showing of hands that it was unanimous.

The mayor e-mailed the meeting agenda with a copy of balances for all bank accounts for the City of Santa Claus for their review by council. These were discussed.

Tad said there have not been any donations in the red box in the Gardens for some time. Monte said the timer for the light on the pole at the fence in the Park has been off schedule. The timer is located in the storage room at the Pavilion. All agreed the new fence surrounding the A T & T exchange boxes looks good. Luis will paint it after the wood has cured & dried if council instructs.

Donita stated she checks the Community Center each weekend and has found the ice machine switch tripped off several times. She asked if a surge protector may need to be installed to stop the power surges during storms. This was discussed and Tad agreed to pick up a surge protector for this purpose.

Limbs hanging over the streets were discussed. David had already trimmed off several at the Thigpen residence on Candy Cane ST as reported by Toombs County Deputy on patrol. Council discussed that there are several more streets with trees hanging over them. Amy stated that, if the limbs are over the city street, it is the responsibility of the city to remove the hazard. David who is responsible for street problems will be alerted of this problem.

Monte stated he is still working with J.B. Dykes to get the lights at the Pavilion replaced. Sue informed council that the bid for the city Chevy S-10 was defaulted due to non payment of the \$300.00 bid 3 months after bidding was closed. Another inquiry offered \$400.00 cash with council agreeing to accept. Sue stated she would contact Triple C Used Cars that their bid of \$400.00 was accepted for the truck and they may pick it up.

NEW BUSINESS: Amy sent a flyer with pictures of new street signs for review. This has been an ongoing search to get new street signs and poles for over a year. She suggested 12" X 12" **STOP** signs with a reindeer peering over the top, **CAUTION** signs at the fountain in the Gardens. Council discussed agreeing the street name signs without holly would allow the names to be larger. Although there was no quota present, Donita voted in favor and Monte voted against the signs as described with a reindeer on top of the STOP signs but both agreed along with Tad that other suggestions are acceptable. The STOP signs entering U.S. Hwy. # 1 will remain the larger size as they are regulated by GDOT.

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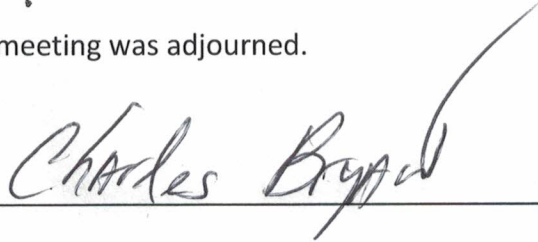
Council discussed limbs on some shoulders in front of residences with all agreeing to contact our neighbors to remove any debris off the shoulders and inform them the city does not have a pickup service for this. Amy stated she tried to contact Reliable Services rep and learned he is longer with the company. She is waiting for bids from the companies offering garbage pickup services for a price on serving the city. It may be possible for one to offer the yard pick up also.

Amy informed the council that, due to covid-19, Gov. Brian Kemp has signed a resolution stating he recommends that masks be worn when entering the government facilities throughout Georgia which includes City Hall. Council agreed this should be posted and also at the Gift Shop for the safety of all. This is under the Cares Act.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Charles (Tad) Bryant, Mayor Pro-tem

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charles Bryant", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the printed name "Charles (Tad) Bryant, Mayor Pro-tem".

City of Santa Claus, Georgia

Regular Monthly Council Meeting, September 15, 2020

Mayor Amy Lawler is in California with her ill mother but present on speaker phone. Mayor Pro-tem Tad Bryant called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Donita Bowen, Monte Powell and David Evans and Sue Grisham. Tad led the Pledge Allegiance to the flag to open the meeting. Sue read the minutes for the August 18, 2020 meeting. A motion was made by Monte second by Donita to accept minutes as read with a showing of hands that it was unanimous.

The mayor e-mailed the meeting agenda with a copy of balances for all bank accounts for the City of Santa Claus for their review by council. These were discussed.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Tad stated he had repaired the gate at The Gardens. Monte said the new lights have been installed at the Pavilion. Monte added that electrician J.B. Dykes who installed the lights checked the ice maker at the Community Center and informed him a surge protector is built in on the unit. David stated he inspected the shoulders on corner of Reindeer and Rudolph ST. The street is washing out under Reindeer ST when we have a big rain which will need to be repaired in the near future.

Amy had sent sketches of playground equipment to order for the park which Council reviewed and discussed. Council agreed to purchase a two-bay swing set and a tire swing in red for the park. Amy will complete the order for the new equipment to be shipped to the city.

The replacement street signs and posts were then discussed again with sketches to review. Council agreed to purchase STOP signs with a reindeer perched on top of the sign, no holly, red letters and green trim on the outside. Street name signs will be in the same design. Donita made a motion second by David with three voting in favor and one opposed of the reindeer and other designs as described. Monte voted against a reindeer on the top of the STOP signs. Amy agreed to proceed with ordering these signs.

When reviewing the city bank account balances, Amy pointed out that the Special Account was not being accessed but, due to the small cash balance of less than \$1,000.00 in the account, the bank is charging \$10.00 per month service charges. She recommended that the account be closed and the balance be moved to the Mayor's Account as this account is routinely accessed when needed. Monte made a motion second by David to close the Special Account and move the balance to the Mayor Account. Council voted unanimously to this action.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Holiday schedules were then discussed. Council agreed that, due to a late Thanksgiving, the Christmas Tree Lighting will be on Thursday, November 19, 2020, at 7:00 P.M. Notices will be posted for the CDC guidelines of social distancing and hand sanitizers will be readily available for all to use. A motion was made by Monte second by David and Council voted unanimously for the November 19 date.



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The Christmas Family Supper was then discussed. Amy suggested that Santa Claus sit on the front porch of the Community Center and allow one family at a time come up to him for the visit with kids and Santa. Santa Will then present the kid(s) with a gift and the family move on into the Community Building where the Council will serve each individual in a "to-go" plate and the family will exit the building out the back door. This would be on the annual date of the second Thursday of December Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. as in the past. David made a motion second by Donita to have the Christmas Supper December 10, 2020, at 6:00 P.M. with Santa Claus greeting kids on the front porch and Council serving individual families in "to-go" plates in the Community Center. A unanimous Council vote favored this event.

The Halloween Trick or Treat was then discussed with Council deciding to make a final decision next month using CDC recommendations. In the past, the City of Santa Claus has followed along with Lyons on the date and time for Trick or Treating. Council agreed that each resident should practice whatever they feel safe with on this matter. Sue agreed to send a letter out to all residents of the dates for the upcoming city activities and the guidelines the Council have agreed on for the events.

Donita stated the door to the cleaning closet at the Community Center was not unlocked for the recent function and the renters did not have access to the broom and/or mop for cleaning the facility. It was agreed that the door should be left unlocked when the facility is being rented so the renters may follow the rules for cleaning. Zac Moore is installing a bar in the storage closet to hang the linen tablecloths on so they will be easily available for rent if desired.

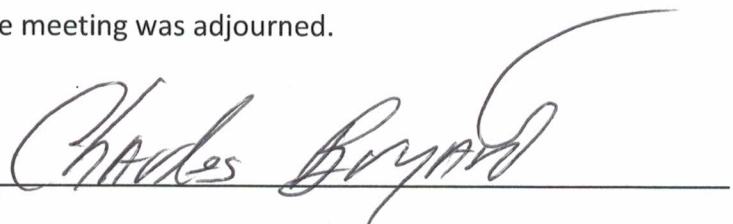
Monte asked for clarification, will all new STOP signs have a reindeer on the top of the sign and was told that, yes, all STOP signs will have a reindeer on top as agreed by the majority of Council.

Amy informed Council that she has contacted Linda Bishop of Bishop Associates will be reviewing the city financial records so to bring them up to state requirement possibly doing audits for the city. Sue added that Linda has been in contact with her, also.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Charles (Tad) Bryant, Mayor Pro-tem

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Charles Bryant", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

City of Santa Claus, Georgia

Regular Monthly Council Meeting, October 20, 2020

Mayor Amy Lawler is in California with her ill mother but present on speaker phone. Mayor Pro-tem Tad Bryant called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Donita Bowen, Monte Powell and David Evans and Sue Grisham, Santa Claus (Woody Smith), Jerry Hodges, and former mayor, Vince Meadows. Tad led group in the Pledge Allegiance to the flag to open the meeting. Sue read the minutes for the September 15, 2020 meeting. A motion was made by Tad second by Monte to accept minutes as read with a showing of hands that it was unanimous.

The mayor e-mailed the meeting agenda with a copy of balances for all bank accounts for the City of Santa Claus for review by council. These were discussed.

**OLD BUSINESS:** There have been speakers damaged in the Gardens and David agreed to order and install the new speakers. Amy stated there may be speakers in the city storage building and asked David to check there before placing an order. Tad agreed to go to Altamaha B & T and close the Special Projects account there as there has been no activity in the account for some time but, the bank is charging \$10.00 per month thus the account balance is dwindling down. Council voted unanimously at the August meeting to close the account and deposit the balance to the Mayor Account at People's Bank as it has a debit card for small purchases when needed. Tad was asked to get a cashier's check in the amount of the account balance and deposit it into the Mayor Account at People's Bank.

Amy stated as voted on by the Council, she has ordered the playground equipment for the park. The equipment costs \$14,997.00 plus the mulch needed with a total purchase of \$22,485.00. Monte stated the swing beside the Pavilion at the Park is tearing apart and he will purchase necessary parts and repair that swing.

Donita stated that the ice machine at the Community Center is frequently tripping off. This was discussed and Council asked Sue to call T.J. Sager, electrician, who has worked on the machine in the past and ask him to check it. Donita added that the rod to hang the tablecloths has not been installed. Sue stated the crew would be coming on Wednesday, 11/18/20, to clean the building.

Sue stated that there has been a complaint again about the basketball goal in the street on Noel ST. David agreed to check with the resident and move the goal out of the street if needed. He added that he has inquired about getting limbs hanging over the street trimmed. Chris Kilgore Tree Serv. has been too busy to serve us.

Amy stated she has been inquiring to contact the proper party to have the tall weeds removed around the retention pond at the Dollar General Store as agreed during the construction of the store.

Sue informed the Council that Clay Cumbie, as in the past, would begin decorating the city facilities on November 7 & 8. Amy added that decorations the Council put up are in the storage shed.



**NEW BUSINESS:** Santa Claus, Woody, addressed the Council at this time. His schedule is booked up but he will try to come by for the Tree Lighting, no definite commitment to that night. However, he is definitely scheduled to be with us on Thursday, December 10, 2020, for the Christmas supper for all families. He asked if the city wanted to contract him to be with us each year in the future for the Tree Lighting. After discussion, Council agreed that we want Santa Claus, Woody, to be with us every year for the Tree Lighting on the Thursday prior to Thanksgiving and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of December for the Christmas supper for all residents.

Jerry Hodges asked Council to sell him C41A 033F, a 25' X 150' strip of land bordering on the north side of Gail Lewis' property on Rudolph Way he purchased from Mrs. Lewis as the building on that property is on that part of the city land. Council asked for \$1,200.00 for the land requested and Jerry replied, since he is paying for surveying and attorney fees, he offered \$800.00. This was discussed. Donita made a motion to sell the 25' X 150' strip of land to Jerry for \$1,000.00 second by Monte with Council voting unanimously in favor of the sale with all hands up. Jerry agreed on this purchase price. This land is listed in Plat Book 33 page 616 in the Toombs County Clerk's Office.

David agreed to recheck the wash under Reindeer ST to decide if it needs immediate repair. Amy stated that property taxes notices have been ordered with a due date of December 31, 2020. Sue stated that only one solar light on the rails entering City Hall are burning. Amy suggested that new lights need to be purchased. New batteries will not correct the problem as she has tried this in the past. Tad agreed to take care of the solar lights at City Hall. Amy stated that the city is in the computer system at Lowe's with tax free purchases and there may be a discount by using the city's phone number, 526-6949.

Amy reminded the Council that \$9,000.00 was allocated for the replacement of the porch at City Hall. This has not been done. Santa Claus, Woody, stated that lumber for building is very high at this time. Amy asked Council to vote for \$30,000.00 be allocated for future repairs of City Hall as it needs a new roof, front porch, etc. Tad made a motion second by David with Council agreeing unanimously that the City allocate \$30,000.00 for future repairs at City Hall with a unanimous decision from Council.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Charles (Tad) Bryant, Mayor Pro-tem

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