

City of Santa Claus, Georgia
Regular Monthly Council Meeting

July 18, 2023

The regular meeting of the Santa Claus City Council was held July 18, 2023. Present were Mayor Donita Bowen, Councilmembers Renee Wright and Monte Powell with Brenda Sells participating on the phone, Eddie and Elaine Wright, Vince Meadows and Sue Grisham. David Evans was out of town. Brenda was recuperating at home from surgery. The meeting began with the group reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Minutes of June 20, 2023, meeting were read. Renee made a motion second by Monte to accept the minutes as read. Council agreed unanimously to accept the minutes as read.

Old Business: The financial reports were reviewed by the Council.

The Garden: Brenda agreed to check with T-Lake on the work needed on Gardens trail. There is a light out at this time. **The Park:** Monte stated there is still an issue with squirrels in the ceiling of the bathroom. Eddie stated he will ask Rusti Wright to check on this issue. **Community Center:** Renee said there has been no problem reported at the building. Donita stated that Vince and Tony Meadows have moved the metal folding tables out of the building and stored them in the storage unit on Noel ST. **Roads:** Nothing to report.

Eddie informed the Council that the work on the manhole at the end of December DR will begin in the near future. As for the use of Safety Grant, Donita has received an email from Weston Cox, GMA, and reads it to state the funds must be used in 2023. She will check further into this. The Dollar General ongoing issue for brush growing on the property was discussed with Attorney Tina Maddox possibly taking a lien on the property to pay for the cleanup. There are still some residents without numbers on the property.

Donita talked with Brenda Williams, Toombs County Tax Commissioner, concerning the millage rate but was instructed to contact Helen Harris, Toombs County Clerk and/or John Jones, Toombs County Manager. She said Helen stated that, as property values increase, property taxes increase and the millage rate should be left at the present rate of 4%. This was discussed. Renee made a motion second by Monte to leave the Millage Rate at 4% with Council agreeing unanimously.

Donita has purchased the Extended Long Range WiFi Receiver System for the Gift Shop and Vince has agreed to install it. She added that she has straightened up the storage lot and will ask Luis Nino to cut the grass in the area. Also, there is only 1 trash can left in storage. The left gate at the entrance of December DR was broken and Sue called Luis to repair it. This has been replaced.

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New Business:.. Donita stated she has been asked to do a live TV news broadcast on Tuesday, July 25 for Scripps News. The topic is the 10 places to visit to celebrate Christmas in July from North Pole, NY, to Santa Claus, IN.

The mayor has received a notice stating all CWS and NTNC water systems must complete and submit a service line inventory to GA EPD on or before October 16, 2024. She has contacted Trey Pearson of Tindal and he stated he's finished their first system and will be working on the City soon. He will need a list of all water users on our system. He also needs a file on all properties and the year built from the tax accessor's office to complete the inventory. She added she will be investigating an article concerning "The Power of Community Beauty: Transforming Small Cities for Success" by CGI Digital.

New playground equipment for the Park was discussed with Donita stating she has been asked to install a swing for toddlers with safe seats for the younger child. Maybe 2 seat seesaw/teeter totter for \$967.00 or a 4 seat \$1,995.00, a Merry-Go-Round for \$6,700.00 Monkey bars for \$2,999.00, etc. could be purchased.

Donita stated a possible one-time Property Tax Relief Grant budget proposal by Gov. Brian Kemp to refund \$950.00 million in property taxes back to homestead owners in the Amended Fiscal Year 2023 budget. She has further details if Council wants them.

Sue informed Council that 3 streetlights have been replaced. Also, she spoke with Stacie Avery and Stacey said she will complete the 2022 audit before the end of the month.

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

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Donita Bowen, Mayor


