

City of Santa Claus, Georgia
Regular Monthly Council Meeting

November 21, 2023

The regular meeting of the Santa Claus City Council was held November 21, 2023. Present were Mayor Donita Bowen, Councilmembers Renee Wright, Monte Powell, and Brenda Sells, and Sue Grisham. David Evans was not present due to a death in his family. The meeting began with the group reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Minutes of October 17, 2023, meetings were read. Renee made a motion second by Monte to accept the minutes as read.

Old Business: The financial reports were reviewed by the Council. The property tax notices have been mailed out to the property owners by Harris Computer Service. Gardens: No word from T-Lake concerning the Gardens lights and repair of them. Park: Rod Harden repaired the lights at the Pavilion with no charge. Community Center: The replacement lights for the chandelier have been installed but a few blew out when replaced. No issues to report on the roads.

Donita stated the Safe Grant was on hold at this time for the banners for the lamp posts with Council agreeing. Donita reminded the Council that if there are any new city officials in 2024, they are required to attend a training session after taking office either February 28 thru March 1 in Athens or March 20 thru March 22 in Tifton both to be conducted by GMA. She reminded the Council that she is delaying the application for the LMIG grant until Fiscal Year 2024 but it must be submitted no later than February 1, 2024. This will be used to resurface a section of Noel ST. Also, Kyle Wiggins has completed the work at the Park for this time for \$3,000.00 and the drainage ditch to divert water from the parking lot for \$600.00.

Dara with Designs by Dara has completed the Island of Misfits toys wood decorations and repainted the two city limit entrance signs of Santa Claus. Wayne Ward cut out the figures for us with Donita sanding the edges and putting the weather sealant on them. These have been placed in front of the Community Center. Also, the old waving Santa Claus has been repaired, repainted and placed beside the City Hall at December DR.

New Business:.. Due to the \$4.00 per month fire protection billed to the city by City of Lyons and passed on to the residents on the water bills each month, Sue was asked to bill the property owner(s) for the \$4.00 if the property is vacant. This will begin with the next billing. Donita stated that Vince Meadows installed the remote access device for the internet at the Gift Shop for credit cards usage. However, we need to increase the access due to the metal roof on the building which interferes with transactions going thru.

November 21, 2023 meeting -page 2- As required, Tindall Enterprises has provided a quote to complete the Lead and Copper Service Line Inventory. Their estimate is \$9,240.00. Council agreed for Tindall to proceed with this service for the city. Republic has informed by email that there will be a 10% increase on garbage pickup for the city beginning 1/01/24. Donita responded that the city agrees for the increase on the rates. Donita recommended in 2024 the city request bids for pressure washing projects. Sue informed her this was done in the past with the best price accepted. Council discussed this matter.

Donita received an email from Joe Watkins of Winder, GA, inquiring if the city would be interested in purchasing a sleigh for \$3,800.00. Council discussed agreeing that, due to no storage for it, we are not interested in this purchase. Also, Zack of Green Home Lawn Service has presented an estimate to trim the cedar trees and clean up afterwards. Walter Wright talked with Zach. This was discussed by the council. Sue said she will get an estimate for the same work from the landscaper, Luis Nino. Another email from former resident, Marcie, Jones with information on the history of the annual Christmas Eve Luminary project. In appreciation for her information, Donita invited her to the Christmas supper.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission (HOGARC) sent Donita information regarding a proposed development of a RaceTrac truck stop to be built in Metter, GA. This is due to the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) as we are located within the included area for possible negative impact for such a construction site in Metter. This was discussed. A reply was requested by 11/23/23. Council agreed they could not see any impact to the city from this construction of a RaceTrac in Metter. Donita will reply to the HOGARC the Council's decision.

The City is hosting the December 5, 2023, meeting of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Plan Listening Session # 1 at the Community Center at 5:00 till 6:00. This is for Lyons, Vidalia, Toombs County and Santa Claus representatives to gather to discuss the 2024 update plan for the areas. There are 5 meetings required by the state and is necessary to maintain local government eligibility for state grants, loans and permits. Council was asked to be thinking on any needs and possibilities we provide for the residents.

At the last meeting City Manager Eddie Wright voiced a concern of the SPLOST account spending. Donita has obtained a copy of the SPLOST agreement listing uses for the SPLOST money received monthly and presented each Council member a copy. This was discussed. Adjustments have been made to comply with the information she has received. Council reviewed the proposed 2024 budget. After the adjustments, Council agreed to postpone playground equipment purchases until 2024. As by law, the city budget is, upon request, available to the news media. Also, a reminder that the ARPA funds transferred to the Water & Sewage account must be spent or obligated by the end of 2024. Council is asked to think about ways the city may use the funds. The GIRMA insurance appraiser came on November 14, 2023, to take pictures of all city facilities for the coverage. David Evans assisted in this.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned. Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Donita Bowen, Mayor

