

## City of Thomasville Council Meeting, August 23, 2021

The Council of the City of Thomasville met in a regular session with Mayor Greg Hobbs presiding and the following Councilmembers present: Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Jay Flowers, Todd Mobley and Wanda Warren. Also present were the City Manager, J. Alan Carson; City Attorney, Tim Sanders; and other staff. The meeting was held in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 144 East, Jackson Street, Thomasville, Georgia.

This meeting was held in a manner that observed active Executive Orders and Health Advisories provided by Georgia Governor Kemp, Centers for Disease Control, Department of Health, and local health officials in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Seating was limited and additional safety measures were required such as, but not limited to, social distancing and the wearing of facial coverings, to ensure the health and safety of meeting participants and the citizens of Thomasville. Simultaneous access to the meeting was provided to those members of the press and citizens not present via the City of Thomasville's online live stream feed located at [www.thomasville.org](http://www.thomasville.org).

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Hobbs called the Council Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

### **INVOCATION**

Councilmember Flowers gave the invocation.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pro Tem led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler motioned to approve the August 9, 2021 City Council Meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Warren seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

### **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Mayor Hobbs acknowledged the following citizens as listed on the Sign in Sheet.

1. Rich Koenders voiced concerns regarding Council's consideration of the Bellamy PUD (Planned Unit Development). He distributed printed copies of his concerns to Councilmembers, City Attorney, City Manager and City Clerk. Koenders noted the intrusion of water drainage through neighboring property of Summercreek Cove may compound existing water drainage issues in the same area. He noted the installation of a drainage pipe for the project would potentially compromise his home's foundation and voiced further concerns regarding the apparent lack of defined plans by the developer for any kind of buffer between Summercreek Cove and the Bellamy PUD.
2. Jenni Jenkins also voiced concerns regarding the Bellamy PUD. She noted her property is adjacent to the proposed retention pond and requested the plans be reviewed by the developer and City officials again for consideration of leaving a barrier between the retention pond and the adjacent homes.
3. Jeffrey Jones, the developer for the Bellamy PUD, addressed Council regarding citizens' concerns for the PUD. He noted having communicated with the Summercreek Cove Home Owners' Association and have reached an understanding regarding the barrier concerns. Jones further noted the developers are working with the City to work through issues and concerns voiced at this meeting and his developers are looking at primarily constructing high-end quality homes for the Bellamy PUD, similar to his other developments in Thomasville.
4. Matt Kirkley voiced his concerns regarding the accounting of the Special Hotel/Motel Tax within the City of Thomasville's FY2017 Budget. He noted there appeared to be errors in the accounting relating to budget line items titled *Transfer to Events Center*, *Transfers In* and *Transfers Out*. Kirkley voiced further concerns in

regards to the comparison of named component units and Special Revenue Funds and the types of each entity as reported.

5. Lucinda Brown addressed Council with several inquiries. She inquired of Council and City Manager regarding meeting dates for citizen input in relation to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and requested ARPA funds also be used to address racial equity for Thomasville. Brown noted she represented the residents of the Dewey City neighborhood and requested to know what was done about the recent water issues; she noted the residents have not received communication stating what was done to rectify the issues and to let them know the water was safe for use. She further noted a Park Assessment is not necessary to find out what the southside of Thomasville needs in relation to parks; the children need a pool and green space.

### **ADOPT AGENDA**

Councilmember Flowers motioned to adopt the agenda as presented, with no exceptions. Councilmember Mobley seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business for consideration at this meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **First reading of an ordinance to rezone certain parcels from R-1 Residential and C-1 Commercial to Planned Unit Development (PUD).**

City Planner, Kenny Thompson reported the applicant is proposing to develop approximately 14.6 acres of land fronting East Jackson Street that is locally known as “Bellamy’s Boat Shop”. Currently there are two vacant commercial structures that face East Jackson Street, with the rest of the property being undeveloped land. The property backs up to the Summer Creek Cove development, and also has a small amount of frontage (60 feet) on Sally Street. This property falls within two “zones” – the commercial zoned property along East Jackson Street and the residential zoned property behind. The earliest zoning maps of Thomasville maintain this distinction; commercial uses that are appropriate along major corridors, with residential neighborhoods behind. The Planned Unit Development (or PUD) zone is a flexible, “floating” zone that can be applied to any parcel within the City of Thomasville. In order to apply to use this zone, the applicant must meet a number of conditions and requirements which provide a more creative and higher quality development than would be required under the base zoning. Ultimately, the City is given a greater level of predictability about what will be placed on the site with a higher level of accountability on the quality and design of the new development. A PUD is required to submit a concept plan for approval of the application along with an abundance of supporting information. The applicant, and any future land owner, will be bound by the terms of the PUD as well as any additional conditions, stipulations or safeguards imposed by the City Council. During the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting, the development was reviewed for the following:

- The application has been reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The development is consistent with the City’s goals to Improve our Commercial Corridors, Encourage Infill Development, Expand Housing Options, and Expand Neighborhood Walkability.
- The application has been reviewed for conformance with the PUD requirements, including the Community Benefit Statement, Performance Standards Comparison, and Improvements Required Comparison.
- The Concept Plan has been reviewed for the character, location, and appropriateness of the development in relation to surrounding land uses.
- The Concept Plan has been reviewed for architectural appropriateness, landscaping, streetscape, and opens space features within the development.

Finding the PUD Application in conformance with the criteria, staff recommends Council action to approve the PUD rezoning request as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

In reference to the citizens’ concerns voiced earlier in this meeting, City Planner Thompson noted that the City Engineer must review plans regarding stormwater and drainage to ensure proper water flow for the entire area prior to approval of the final plans. He further noted the developer had reached an agreement with the HOA of the adjacent Summercreek Cove in relation to the buffer between the two properties. Jeffery Jones, Bellamy PUD developer, address Council again and noted that a 4-5 foot landscaped buffer is being considered and the developer is amenable



to further discussions with the HOA to work through the various landscaping concerns. There was further discussion regarding other developments of Mr. Jones. It was noted that Madison Grove was developed by Mr. Jones. City Manager Carson reported the property was already zoned as R-1; which provides for residential development without the additional conditions, stipulations or safeguards that a Planned Unit Development (PUD) imposes. It was noted that the engineers of the developer and the City of Thomasville were working together to ensure there were no negative impact on residents.

Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler motioned to order the ordinance to rezone certain parcels from R-1 Residential and C-1 Commercial to Planned unit Development (PUD) as read for the first time, as presented, with no exceptions. Councilmember Warren seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

The title of the ordinance read for the first time, passed and carried over follows.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA, OF 1971, AS AMENDED WHICH IS SET FORTH IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF THOMASVILLE AS CHAPTER 22, CAPTIONED "ZONING", BY EXCLUDING A CERTAIN TRACT OF LAND FROM PARCEL 8 OF SECTION 22-81 CAPTIONED "R-1, RESIDENTIAL", AND BY EXCLUDING A CERTAIN TRACT OF LAND FROM PARCEL 10 OF SECTION 22-81 CAPTIONED "C-1, COMMERCIAL", TO DESCRIBE SAID EXCLUDED TRACT AND TO DESIGNATE THE SAID SAME TRACT AS PARCEL 2 OF SECTION 22-81 CAPTIONED "PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD)". TO ESTABLISH THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE; TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HERewith; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

**Resolution to accept the 2021 Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Law Enforcement Training Grant and to approve the purchase of equipment.**

Police Chief, John Letteney reported for fiscal year 2021, Governor Brian Kemp recommended, and lawmakers approved, \$15 million to provide a law enforcement training grant program for state and local law enforcement agencies. The program is designed to grant funds on a competitive basis to qualified state and local law enforcement agencies to support scenario-based, hands-on training for law enforcement officers in use of force or de-escalation. Chief Letteney further reported the Thomasville Police Department has been awarded the 2021 Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Law Enforcement grant for the purchase of Use-of-Force/De-escalation training equipment. A Request for Bids was posted online from July 27 until August 11, 2021. Only one bid was received. Other similar vendors were contacted regarding the simulation equipment; this included SRT Supply, Galls, and Cheaper Than Dirt, and none of the vendors were found to sell the requested simulation equipment. A Sole Source provider letter was submitted by Ultimate Training Munitions, Inc. Chief Letteney noted this equipment would be used by the Thomasville Police Department as well as other law enforcement agencies and entities for training.

Councilmember Flowers motioned to adopt the resolution to accept the 2021 Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Law Enforcement Training Grant and to approve the purchase of equipment, as presented. Councilmember Mobley seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

The adopted resolution follows.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to provide the necessary use-of-force/de-escalation simulation training opportunities for law enforcement; and,

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to accept the grant award from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Law Enforcement Training (CJCLET) grant program in the amount of fifty-six thousand four hundred forty-four dollars (\$56,411); and,

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to authorize an expenditure, in an amount not to exceed fifty-six thousand four hundred forty-four dollars (\$56,411) for the purchase of use-of-force/de-escalation simulation equipment; and,

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to authorize the Mayor to sign all necessary and related documents as shall be necessary in relation to the CJCLET Grant.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, hereby authorizes the acceptance of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Law Enforcement Training (CJCLET) grant program in the amount of fifty-six thousand four hundred forty-four dollars (\$56,411); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes an expenditure, in an amount not to exceed fifty-six thousand four hundred forty-four dollars (\$56,411) for the purchase of use-of-force/de-escalation simulation equipment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes the Mayor of the City of Thomasville, or his/her successor, as the signatory on all necessary and related documents as shall be necessary in relation to the CJCLET Grant award.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, on this, the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of August 2021.

## REPORTS

City Manager Carson requested Executive Director of Marketing & Customer Service, Sheryl Sealy, to provide a report regarding an award received by City of Thomasville. Executive Director Sealy reported the City of Thomasville received the Georgia Downtown Association's 2021 Award of Excellence for Promotion: *Premier Special Event*, in recognition of its landmark 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Rose Show and Festival. The award was presented at the Georgia Downtown Association's (GDA) annual conference. She explained the pandemic presented challenges for staff to produce a memorable centennial event while also creating safe experiences for visitors. Executive Director Sealy briefly reviewed the events, collaborative efforts, partnerships that made the event a success. It was noted the traditional parade was replaced with life-sized displays that were stationary and placed on Broad Street in a manner that visitors could remain socially distanced while walking through the historical displays. The centennial celebration included dozens of displays filled with live roses and special photo opportunities for visitors to enjoy. Executive Director Sealy further noted that while it took numerous people and organizations to produce the successful event, she especially commended the efforts of the coordinating staff of Main Street and Tourism as follows for their tireless efforts and hard work:

Director of Downtown & Tourism Development, April Norton; Tourism Manager, Bonnie Hayes; Main Street & Special Events Manager, Christy Owens; Special Events Coordinator, Madison Eaton; Main Street Assistant, Tiffany Davis; and, Tourism Information Specialist, Angel Clemmons.

Mayor Hobbs requested City Manager Carson address concerns heard from citizens Lucinda Brown and Matt Kirkley. Mayor Hobbs referred to the City Manager's recent communication to Council which provided an updated of detailed procedures followed for the water issues in Dewey City that Mrs. Brown had mentioned during this meeting's *Citizens to be Heard*. City Manager Carson noted that city staff had previously met with Lavetta Jones, Caroline Coachman and Tony Bowdry regarding the water concerns in Dewey City and completed everything that was requested of the city at that time.

In reference to Mr. Kirkley's concerns with prior years' budgets and audits, City Manager Carson noted corrections are being made to numerous policies and procedures as a result of recent audits. It was suggested that Mr. Kirkley contact City Manager Carson to review his questions regarding policies and procedures.

Councilmembers collectively encouraged the community to be vigilant in their social distancing measures and stay safe in regards to the coronavirus pandemic as positive case numbers are continuing to rise with the new Delta variant of the virus.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Having no further business to discuss, the Thomasville City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:43 PM.

  
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Mayor, Greg Hobbs

  
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ATTEST: City Clerk

