

City of Thomasville Council Meeting, October 14, 2024

The Council of the City of Thomasville met in regular session on the above date. Mayor Todd Mobley presided, and the following Councilmembers were present: Councilmembers Scott Chastain, Royal Baker and Lucinda Brown. Also present were the City Manager, Chris White; Assistant City Manager, Sheryl Sealy; City Attorney, Timothy C. Sanders; Chief Financial Officer, Ashley Cason; other city staff; citizens and members of the media. It shall be reported that Mayor Pro Tem Terry Scott was absent from this meeting. The meeting was held in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 144 East Jackson Street, Thomasville, Georgia. Simultaneous access to the meeting was provided to those members of the media and citizens unable to attend the meeting via the City of Thomasville's online live stream feed located at www.thomasville.org.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Todd Mobley called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION

Councilmember Royal Baker gave the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Scott Chastain led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Chastain moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 23, 2024, as presented. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

PROCLAMATION

Councilmember Chastain recognized that community planning and plans can help manage the constant change in ways that provide better choices for communities and their residents. He acknowledged the American Planning Association has designated October 2024 as National Planning Month and presented the City of Thomasville's Planning Department with a proclamation and commended them for all the work that they do for the City of Thomasville and its residents.

RECOGNITION

Hurricane Helene Response Teams: City Manager Chris White requested all staff that helped with storm recovery efforts to enter Council Chambers. He reported that while the City of Thomasville was spared a direct hit from the Category 4 Hurricane Helene, its residents still sustained an enormous amount of damage from the storm. City Manager White reviewed the extensive operating procedures involved with storm recovery and coordination of mutual aid from other municipalities. He reviewed an approximate timeline from beginning to end with storm recovery efforts, noting that there were crews assessing physical damage as soon as it was safe for them to travel into any affected areas. City Manager White noted that the City of Thomasville can certainly attribute the quick resolution of Helene's impact on Thomasville to the quick action and coordinated assistance from the entire Team Thomasville - electric, telecommunications, solid waste, and public works crews, police, fire – as well as the visiting mutual aid crews. The work of these individuals was vital in addressing the storm's aftermath and aiding in Thomasville's recovery process. Councilmembers collectively commended all of Team Thomasville, noting there were crews out as early as 3:30 AM after the worst of the storm had passed through the area.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

1. Arline Hampton, resident of Thomas County and speaking on behalf of Thomasville's southside community, voiced concerns regarding the City of Thomasville's Parks and Recreation. She read a prepared statement in which she stated "*Why is it that our black communities are always asked to forget our past, when others are allowed to embrace and build upon theirs. I submit to you that instead of forgetting our past, lets embrace*

it and build upon it as we move forward in hopes of a bright more equitable future for those who have had to suffer inequities, discrimination and divestment. Let us embrace what has always made us strong, a cumulative past with the hopes of a better future.” Ms. Hampton continued, listing the benefits of physical activity and good activism. She voiced concerns about Thomas University’s exclusive use of Varnedoe Park Baseball and adjacent soft ball fields; noting that until recently, the surrounding community of Varnedoe Park was not aware it could use Varnedoe Park as well. Ms. Hampton voiced further concerns relating to the perception that city owned parks on the southside of Thomasville have not been maintained. Ms. Hampton provided a copy of her prepared statement.

2. Candee Henderson, resident of Thomas County, voiced concerns of the effect the fossil fuel industry has had on global warming. She noted that the fossil fuel industry had chosen to downplay the long-term effects of the use of natural gas. Ms. Henderson encouraged Council to consider finding viable uses of energy that would not include the use of fossil fuels. She suggested that the use of solar power would help Thomasville and Thomas County reach 100% renewable energy by 2035.
3. Rose Major, resident of Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Thomasville, Georgia, also voiced concerns regarding Parks and recreation. She encouraged the City Council to reassess the use of Varnedoe Park by the southside community. She also requested to know why the southside parks were allowed to deteriorate when others were maintained. Ms. Major also requested that Council meetings be an open forum for questions from citizens regarding their concerns.

ADOPT AGENDA

Councilmember Brown moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business for consideration by the City Council at this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

First reading of an ordinance to annex and rezone 3472 South Pinetree Boulevard, Thomasville Georgia (Parcel No. 046 119, 14.12 acres).

City Planner Kenny Thompson reported that Centerville Partners, LLC recently purchased a property located outside the city limits at 3472 S. Pinetree Boulevard. The property owner is requesting to annex the property into the City and simultaneously rezone the property from A (Agricultural) to R-1A (Single-Family Residential). The application indicates that the 14.12-acre +/- property will be developed with 20-30 single-family homes. The subject property, which is in an unincorporated area of the Thomas County, has a County zoning designation that allows for low-density, single-family residential uses; it is also adjacent to the City’s “Suburban Neighborhood” future character area, which is primarily defined by larger lot, single-family homes. The applicant’s request to rezone the property at the time of annexation to R-1A is compatible with surrounding properties in the area and allows for appropriate residential land uses. The annexation and rezoning requests are consistent with the land use goals and future character areas of the comprehensive plan [Thomasville: Blueprint 2028]. An annexation into the City could more effectively preserve and enhance the existing neighborhoods that surround the subject property while also encouraging better suburban development. Specific considerations for the rezoning request include:

- Most of the properties that share a boundary with the subject property have well-established residential uses.
- The nearest City parcels are located within the R-1A zoning district.
- The A zoning district permits rural agricultural uses by right that are not compatible with the R-1A zoning district’s purpose to maintain and promote a desirable residential environment.
- The R-1A zoning district limits residential development to detached, single-family dwellings.
- The proposed development is well within the density limits of the R-1A zoning district, which requires a minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet (or .34 acres).

City Planner Thompson noted that finding the request to rezone the property at the time of annexation to be compatible with surrounding properties and consistent with the comprehensive plan, Staff recommends approval of an annexation and rezoning from A (Agricultural) to R-1A (Single-Family residential).

Councilmember Chastain moved to order the ordinance to annex and rezone 3472 South Pinetree Boulevard, Thomasville, Georgia as read for the first time, passed, and carried over as presented. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. Discussion ensued regarding the density of the project. Mayor Mobley requested to know how many houses would be permitted within the project area. City Planner Thompson noted it could be 20-30 on the entire 14 acres with this type of zoning. There was no further discussion. The motion remained unchanged. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The ordinance title follows.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX AND INCORPORATE CERTAIN UNINCORPORATED LAND, WHICH IS CONTIGUOUS UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF O.C.G.A. 36-36-1 TO THE EXISTING CORPORATE LIMITS OF SAID CITY, UPON THE REQUEST CENTERVILLE PARTNERS, LLC, OWNER & DAVID HARDY, OWNER-AGENT OF THE LAND PROPOSED TO BE ANNEXED AND INCORPORATED; TO DESCRIBE THE LAND AND PROVIDE THAT A CERTIFIED COPY OF THE ORDINANCE AND SURVEY OF SAID LAND, SO INCORPORATE, BE FILED BY THE CLERK OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF THOMASVILLE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA; TO PRESCRIBE THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE ANNEXATION AS PROVIDED BY O.C.G.A. 36-36-2; 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 THOMAS COUNTY AND TO DESIGNATE THE SAID SAME TRACT AS **PARCEL 51**, OF SECTION 22-91 CAPTIONED "**R-1A, SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**"; TO ESTABLISH THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE; TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Ratify Resolution to Declare Local State of Emergency as a result of Hurricane Helene.

City Manager, Chris White reported that on September 25, 2024, in preparation of the impending Hurricane Helene, Mayor Mobley signed a resolution to Declare a Local State of Emergency that aligned with Georgia Governor Kemp's declaration for a State of Emergency in Georgia.

Councilmember Brown moved to ratify the Resolution to Declare Local State of Emergency as a result of Hurricane Helene. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. Councilmembers thanked Team Thomasville for their efforts in keeping Thomasville safe during and following the storm. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The ratified resolution follows.

**CITY OF THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Georgia declared a State of Emergency in Georgia on September 25, 2024, beginning at 7:00 AM in response to Tropical Storm Helene; and

WHEREAS, the National Hurricane Center forecasts Tropical Storm Helene may produce damaging winds, heavy rainfall, and flooding in the State of Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the Tropical Storm Helene is forecasted to make landfall in the evening of Thursday, September 26, 2024 as a major hurricane, along areas of the Florida gulf coast and portions of the Florida panhandle and is projected to travel northeast affecting areas across Georgia, particularly south central Georgia; and

WHEREAS; potential flooding, fallen trees, downed power lines, and debris may render the City of Thomasville's network of roads impassable in affected areas, isolating residences and person from access to essential public services; and

WHEREAS, Section 1.12(c)(8) of the Charter of the City of Thomasville provides that the City of Thomasville is authorized "To establish procedures for determining and proclaiming that an emergency situation exists within or without the city and to make and carry out all reasonable

provisions deemed necessary to deal with or meet such an emergency for the protection, safety, health, or well-being of the citizens of the city;”

WHEREAS, as many Georgia cities and unified governments, have taken steps to prepare and attempt to ensure safety of their citizens before, during and after Hurricane Helene, including but not limited to (i) banning large public gatherings in public places; (ii) closing city offices and buildings to the general public; and (iii) authorizing the governing bodies of such cities and related boards and commissions to conduct public meetings and take votes by teleconference in conformity and accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(g);

WHEREAS, in the judgement of the City Council of the City of Thomasville, there exist emergency circumstances as a result of Hurricane Helene within the territorial limits of the City of Thomasville requiring extraordinary and immediate corrective actions for the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Thomasville and surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, additional measures may be required in the coming days and weeks to address the effects of Hurricane Helene, which is fluid and evolving, and such measures will likely need to be executed quickly and free from the usual formalities and procedures required for City action in light of the exigencies of the emergency situation resulting from Hurricane Helene.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

Section 1. Incorporation of Recitals. The Recitals set forth above are incorporated herein by this reference as if set forth fully in this Section 1.

Section 2. Approval and Authorization of a Declaration of Local State of Emergency. The City Council for the City of Thomasville, Georgia approves the Declaration of a Local State of Emergency and authorizes the Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tempore in the Mayor’s absence, to execute the Declaration of Local State of Emergency.

Section 3. General Authority. From and after the approval of this Resolution, the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, City Manager, officers, and employees of the City of Thomasville, Georgia are hereby authorized, empowered and directed to do all such acts and things and to execute all such documents as may be necessary to comply with the provisions of the Declaration of Local State of Emergency as executed and are further authorized to take any and all further actions and execute and deliver any and all other documents and certificates, including but not limited to the Declaration of Local State of Emergency, as may be necessary or desirable in connection with the execution and delivery of the Declaration of Local State of Emergency and any related documents, all of the foregoing in consultation with the City Attorney.

Section 4. Actions Approved and Confirmed. All acts and doings of the City Council, Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, the City Manager, the officers, and employees of the City of Thomasville, Georgia that are in conformity with the purposes and intents of this Resolution and in the furtherance of the Declaration of Local State of Emergency and the execution, delivery, and performance of the Declaration of Local State of Emergency and related documents shall be, and the same hereby are, in all respects approved and confirmed.

Section 5. Severability of Invalid Provisions. If any one or more of the provisions herein contained shall be held contrary to any express provision of law or contrary to the policy of express law, though not expressly prohibited, or against public policy, or shall for any reason whatsoever be held invalid, then such provisions shall be null and void and shall be deemed separable from the remaining provisions and shall in no way affect the validity of any of the other provisions hereof or of the Declaration of Local State of Emergency ratified hereunder.

Section 6. Repealing Clause. All resolutions or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions herein contained are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby superseded and repealed.

Section 7. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

Adopted and approved this 25th day of September 2024.

Resolution in support of Georgia Recreation and Parks Association (GRPA) annual membership.

Manager – Parks/Recreation & Golf, Mike Owens, reported that the Georgia Recreation and Park Association (GRPA) is an organization dedicated to the Support and Promotion of Recreation and Park Agencies within the state of Georgia while encouraging Healthy Lifestyles for our citizens. Based in Conyers, Georgia, the GRPA is a subsidiary of the

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The 2023 City of Thomasville Parks Master Plan highlighted many recommendations to improve the parks system. A few of which were:

- (1) Add programming to meet unmet community needs
- (2) Identify alternative funding streams to implement this plan
- (3) Continue to build and establish a brand for the COT Parks & Recreation Department

Joining the GRPA will help with not just these three recommendations, but many more. The GRPA offers employee certifications, hands-on training, networking, and potential grant funding for the COT Parks and Recreation Department.

Councilmember Chastain moved to adopt the resolution as presented. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion. Discussion ensued regarding membership in GRPA. It was noted the local YMCA was also a member; however, dual membership within one municipality was approved. It was further noted the membership will assist with training opportunities and possible grant funding. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The adopted resolution follows.

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA, EXPRESSING ITS COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING RECREATIONAL RESOURCES; SUPPORT OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE GEORGIA RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR NECESSARY EDUCATION AND RESOURCES FOR THE CITY OF THOMASVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND STAFF; TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, OR MAYOR PRO TEM, TO SIGN THIS RESOLUTION AND ALL NECESSARY AND RELATED DOCUMENTS; AND FOR OTHER RELATED AND LAWFUL PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville recognizes the importance of providing recreational resources and encouraging healthy lifestyles to the citizens of the City of Thomasville; and

WHEREAS, the City of Thomasville owns and maintains over twenty recreational facilities, including parks and a municipal golf course; and

WHEREAS, the City of Thomasville's Parks and Recreational Department is an integral part of the City of Thomasville, providing oversight and daily operation of parks and recreation within the city under the supervision of Manager, Parks/Recreation & Golf; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville commits financial support for the annual budget of the Parks and Recreation Department, to support the provisions of recreational resources to the citizens of Thomasville; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville further recognizes the importance of being a member of the Georgia Recreation and Park Association (GRPA); and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville hereby expresses its commitment of funding to provide for an annual GRPA membership so as to provide for necessary education and resources for the City of Thomasville Parks and Recreation Department.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville expresses its desire to continue to financially support the City of Thomasville Parks and Recreation Department's annual budgetary needs; including an annual membership in the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association so as to provide for necessary education and resources for the City of Thomasville Parks and Recreation Department and staff, and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall be in full force and effect upon passage and adoption by the Council of the City of Thomasville and that any and

all other resolutions, acts, or ordinances in conflict with the Resolution shall be, and they are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby repealed, and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Thomasville hereby authorizes the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, to sign this Resolution on their behalf and all associated documents related to the passage and implementation of the provisions of the Resolution and does authorize the Clerk of the City of Thomasville to attest all signatures and make this Resolution part of the permanent records of the City of Thomasville.

SO RESOLVED, AND ADOPTED, this 14th day of October 2024.

Resolution to apply and commit matching funds for a Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant application for Balfour Park Renovations.

City Planner, Kenny Thompson reported the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program is a federal program authorized by Congress for assisting states and local governments with funds to develop and renovate outdoor recreation facilities. This grant has funded many projects for the City of Thomasville over the years including Country Oaks, Remington Park, Cherokee Lake, and Cassidy Road Pond. Staff requests to apply for the LWCF grant to support improvements at Balfour Park. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources administers LWCF grants in Georgia and follows a 2-year grant cycle. The next LWCF grant will not be awarded until the Fall of 2025, but pre-applications are due by October 31, 2024. Applicants will be notified in February 2025 if they can proceed with second-level applications, which are due in May 2025. Project grants are expected to be awarded by the National Parks Service Fall 2025. Based on recommendations from the citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City recently launched a visioning project for park improvements at Balfour Park to ensure that the park's future design and programming are community driven. The anticipated park features, and programming have been informed by an ongoing engagement effort that includes a project steering committee, an online community survey, and a visioning charrette event. A professional design team from Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. was hired to help bring the community's vision for Balfour Park to life. The design team is creating a master plan of phased park improvements and developing a design concept for Phase 1 implementation and construction. The LWCF grant and matching funds would be used to support the implementation and construction of Phase 1 of the forthcoming Balfour Park Master Plan. The maximum LWCF grant request is \$500,000 and requires a dollar-for-dollar match. This is a reimbursement grant program; improvements to Balfour Park will be initially funded using SPLOST funds in the 2026 budget.

Councilmember Brown moved to adopt a resolution to apply and commit matching funds for the LWCF Grant for Balfour Park as presented. Councilmember Chastain seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The adopted resolution follows.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal program that is distributed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR); and,

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to enhance public parks for the greater good of the community; and,

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia desires to submit a LWCF grant application so as to obtain funding assistance for improvements to Balfour Park; 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 LWCF grant pre-application and second-level application, if invited;

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to commit up to \$500,000 in matching funds as required by the LWCF grant program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, hereby authorizes the submission of the pre-application and second-level application to the LWCF grant program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes the commitment of funds in the FY2026 Budget as match for the Balfour Park renovations;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore of the City of Thomasville as the signatory on all necessary and related documents as shall be necessary in relation to the LWCF grants program application.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, on this, the 14th day of October 2024.

Resolution to approve bid award for the purchase of Paradise Park Phase I Improvements and to authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem to sign necessary and related documents to execute the contract.

City Planner, Kenny Thompson reported that in 2020, the City of Thomasville applied for a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant for Paradise Park. The grant was awarded to the City in 2023 for \$200,000 and required the local community to provide equal matching funds. Elements of the original project scope include enhancements to the historic carriage paths, a ¼ mile walking loop within the park, connection to the Community Trail, pedestrian lighting, installation of new benches, tables, and trash receptacles, and improvements to the gravel parking lot. The project includes furnishing all labor, equipment and materials to perform site work and construction of the Paradise Park Phase I improvements and performing other necessary and appurtenant work as otherwise described and enumerated and shown in the specifications and referenced plans. This project was advertised for 30 days to the Georgia Procurement Registry as well as the City’s website. A total of three potential bidders secured plans, with one bid proposal received for the project. This proposal was opened on September 26th, 2024, with Green’s Backhoe having the sole bid of \$1,632,973 to complete the entire project. This project was bid with an alternate to allow flexibility in the final elements to be included within the project scope without requiring the project to be rebid. In reviewing the project bid, staff finds that all necessary work to fulfill Phase I requirements can be achieved for \$1,399,729, and request that Council approve the award up to this amount. The work is to be completed within one hundred and twenty (120) calendar days from the Notice to Proceed date. The following is a summary of the bids received:

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>BID AMOUNT</u>
Green’s Backhoe	\$1,632,973
ConstructConnect	NO BID
David Taylor Construction	NO BID

City Planner Thompson requested that the Council award the contract for the purchase of 2024 Paradise Park Phase I Improvements to Green’s Backhoe for \$1,399,729 as being qualified to perform the services and further authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem to sign all required paperwork to execute the contract. The work will be funded utilizing 2018 SPLOST funds, with \$200,000 to be reimbursed through the LWCF Grant.

Councilmember Chastain moved to adopt the resolution to approve the bid award for the purchase of Paradise Park Phase Improvements as presented. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The adopted resolution follows.

**CITY OF THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the City of Thomasville has it as their responsibility to provide recreation countywide as a provision of the Service Delivery Strategy; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Thomasville owns and maintains over twenty recreational facilities; of which Paradise Park is a park that is in need of enhancements to provide recreational opportunities for the community; and

WHEREAS, the elements of the scope for Paradise Park Phase I Improvements Project include enhancements to the historic carriage paths, a ¾ mile walking loop within the park, connection to the Community Trail, pedestrian lighting, installation of new benches, tables, and trash receptacles, and improvements to the gravel parking lot; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia desires to award a contract to Green's Backhoe in an amount of \$1,399,729 to perform the work necessary to complete the Paradise Park Phase I Improvements Project; and

WHEREAS, the Paradise Park Phase I Improvements Project will be funded utilizing 2018 SPLOST funds, and with \$200,000 to be reimbursed by funds available through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant awarded to the City of Thomasville in 2023; and

WHEREAS, the City Council for the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to authorize a signatory for all necessary documents relating to the award of bid for the Paradise Park Phase I Improvements and execute the contract.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council for the City of Thomasville, Georgia approves the bid award to Green's Backhoe in an amount of \$1,399,729; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, authorizes the expenditures of the Paradise Park Phase I Improvements Project to be funded utilizing 2018 SPLOST funds, with \$200,000 to be reimbursed by funds available through the Land and Water Conservation Fun Grant awarded to the City of Thomasville in 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council for the City of Thomasville, Georgia, authorizes the Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tem in the Mayor's absence, as the signatory on all necessary and related documents to execute and deliver the contract to proceed.

SO RESOLVED this, the 14th day of October, 2024.

Resolution to apply and commit matching funds for a Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program application for Phase II Renovations to Paradise Park.

City Planner, Kenny Thompson reported that The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program is a grant and loan program administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and authorized by The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act. Program funds will be dispersed for the purpose of providing stewardship to state parks; state lands and wildlife management areas; to support local parks and trails; and to protect critical conservation lands. Eligible applicants include qualified local governments (as determined by the Department of Community Affairs), constituted recreation authorities, state agencies and non-governmental entities with a core mission of conservation. Pre-applications are due October 15, 2024, with second level applications due May 30, 2025. Final notifications will be given Summer 2025. The Red Hills Region is home to over 200,000 acres of native longleaf pine forest, one of the largest privately owned forests in the United States, yet for a majority of Thomasville residents and visitors, this ecosystem remains largely unseen and unknown. Paradise Park, centrally located in Thomasville, has the unique opportunity to showcase the landscape of the Red Hills, with one of the largest known stands of old-growth longleaf pine located in an urban setting. Beginning in 2019, the Planning Department has worked with the community and steering committee to develop a long-term master plan for the park. This phased approach will include several elements of the initial master plan, including the restoration of seven acres of native wiregrass understory, increased accessibility to nature-based outdoor recreation, providing nature-based educational opportunities within the park, and mitigating stormwater through the construction of a wetland pond. This restoration project will provide opportunities for residents and visitors to experience this vital ecosystem and learn about the important role it plays in our local economy. The GOSP grant is available for up to \$3,000,000, with a required minimum match of 25%. Private donations have been committed to the project to cover the match if the City is awarded the grant. This is a reimbursement grant program; renovations will initially be funded using SPLOST funds in the 2025-2026 budget and all funds will be reimbursed.

Councilmember Chastain moved to adopt the resolution to submit a GOSP Stewardship Program Grant application for Phase II Renovations to Paradise Park as presented. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. It was noted that this grant can be applied for annually. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The adopted resolution follows.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) is a state program that is distributed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR); and,

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to enhance public parks for the greater good of the community; and,

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia desires to submit a GOSP grant application so as to obtain funding assistance for improvements to Paradise Park; 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 GOSP grant pre-application and 2nd-level application, if invited;

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to commit a minimum of \$750,000 in matching funds as required by the GOSP grant program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, hereby authorizes the submission of the pre-application and 2nd level application to the GOSP grant program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes the commitment of funds in the FY2025 Budget as match for the Paradise Park renovations;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore of the City of Thomasville as the signatory on all necessary and related documents as shall be necessary in relation to the GOSP Grants Program application.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, on this, the 14th day of October 2024.

Motion to approve the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Agreement between the City of Thomasville and Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Family and Children Services and to authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem to sign the agreement and related documents.

Customer Service Manager, Melissa Creel reported that the City of Thomasville is currently in an agreement with the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) to provide funding through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for residents of Thomasville. This program provides low-income families with monetary assistance to pay for electric services provided by the City of Thomasville. The Neighborhood Service Center is the liaison that fields all applications, as well as the disbursement of funds from DFCS to the City of Thomasville. In 2023 and 2024, residents of the City of Thomasville received \$701,937 processed through the LIHEAP program. Applicants will receive funds based on annual income level and household size. These fund levels will be \$350.00, \$450.00 and \$500.00.

Councilmember Baker moved to approve the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Agreement between the City of Thomasville and the Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Family and Children Services and to authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem to sign the agreement and related documents. Councilmember

Brown seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0, with the following votes recorded:
AYES: Mobley, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

REPORTS

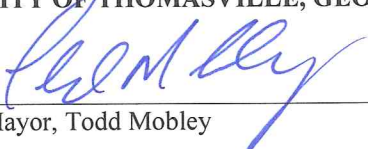
Councilmember Brown thanked those citizens who attended and participated in the Balfour Park Charrette held Saturday, she noted there were good discussions. She further noted that citizens have been coming to Council and leadership since 2015 with concerns about Balfour Park, it is just now at the point where the City can move forward with Balfour Park. Councilmember Brown further noted that the City wants to ensure that things are right when it goes in with Phase I improvements.

Councilmembers commended staff and citizens for their efforts during the storm and the recovery process following Hurricane Helene.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business for consideration, the Thomasville City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:31 PM.

CITY OF THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA



Mayor, Todd Mobley



ATTEST: City Clerk

