



**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 25, 2017- 7:00 PM
109 SOUTH KING STREET
DEPOT COMMUNITY ROOM**

MINUTES

PRESENT: **James F. Palmer, Mayor**
 Matt Barton, Mayor Pro Tem
 David Hammond, Councilman
 Al Edwards, Councilman
 Jackie Palazzolo, Councilwoman

ALSO: Eddie Peterson, City Administrator; Paul Worley, Assistant City Administrator; Sharon Nelson, City Clerk; George Govignon, City Attorney; Jeff Defoor, Director of Electric Utilities; Larry Vickery, City Planner; Garry Moss, Police Chief; Lenny Nesbitt, Fire Chief; and Suzanne Roberts, Downtown Development Authority Director.

1. **Council Meeting Called to Order**
Welcome
Mayor Palmer called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.
Invocation
Mayor Palmer gave the invocation.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Mayor Palmer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.
3. **Amendment or Approval of Proposed Agenda**
Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the September 25, 2017, agenda as presented. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.
4. **Amendment or Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Councilman Edwards made a motion to approve the regular minutes of the September 18, 2017, City Council meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Barton gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

5. **Mayor's Comments**

- A. Mayor Palmer announced that the presentation to be given by the Calhoun Recycling Coalition will be moved from the first item of New Business to Mayor's Comments in order to allow students to get out of the meeting early in order to be ready for school tomorrow.
- **Calhoun Recycling Coalition**
Councilwoman Palazzolo welcomed everyone in attendance stating that we were here tonight to thank all of the businesses that have made our recycling program possible in our community. She began by naming all of the businesses and asking all representatives to stand as their names were called. After thanking all of the business owners Councilwoman Palazzolo called Judy Peterson to the podium and thanked her for her countless voluntary hours, her leadership, and her dedication to the recycling program. Ms. Peterson thanked all of the businesses and the schools for their participation in the recycling program. She went on to discuss the partnership between the City of Calhoun, local businesses, and the Calhoun City School system and noted that all monies collected from the school system go back to the students. Presentations were given by the Primary and Elementary School, the Middle School, and the High School. After completion of the presentations students and Council members paused for a group photo.
- B. Mayor Palmer reminded those present of important dates to remember for the upcoming November 7th general election:
- October 10th is the last day to register to be eligible to vote in the November General/Special Election.
 - October 16th is the first day to mail or issue absentee ballots. Early voting also begins on this date.
 - November 3rd is the last day to mail or issue absentee ballots.
- C. Mayor Palmer announced that voters will have the opportunity to continue the 1% Special Local Option Sales Tax by voting on the 2018 SPLOST, to be used for the purpose of funding capital outlay projects within the City including the continuation of the Peters Street project, numerous recreation projects, and other projects which will be listed on the ballot.
- D. Mayor Palmer notified those present that a Referendum to gain the input of the Electorate of City of Calhoun pertaining to Charter amendments will be on the November 7th ballot for consideration. This will be a non-binding vote pertaining to term limitations of two (2) terms for Mayor and three (3) terms for Council members, as well as changing the number of Council members from four (4) to six (6).

6. **Council Comments**

Councilman Hammond stated that this would be the seventh meeting prior to the expiration of his term. He stated that it had been his great honor to serve this community in his position and to have the opportunity to share some of his passions that he believes in as a human being and a member of Calhoun, Georgia. He noted that one of his passions was the two voting options that are going to be on the ballot. He stated that although the votes are non-

Streamed Live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH233HIK7oQ>

binding, meaning the Council is not bound to do it, he felt that if the voters decide in large margins that it needs to be done this Council would take action. He also stated he felt fairly sure that Representative Meadows would take it to the floor to make a Charter amendment. He also noted that he shared some statistics last week pertaining to other communities our size that have more than four voting members, equating to 79% for the state of Georgia for our size or slightly larger, and 72% of the MEAG communities. He said he would continue to discuss it throughout his tenure with the City and how passionately he believes in it, and why he thinks it is right for Calhoun. He recognized the candidates at tonight's meeting, stating that we had five great people running for office this year giving the citizens many choices. If we expand the Council there will be a lot of great people who will step up and be leaders. He thanked those candidates present for their willingness to do that.

7. Public Hearing and Comments

Mayor Palmer announced at this time, public hearings will be held. The public will have the opportunity to make pro and con comments with a ten minute maximum time limit for each side of the matter, with each person speaking having filed a financial disclosure statement five days prior to the hearing if required, with each person giving their name and address. An inquiry should be made to determine if any elected official has filed a disclosure statement regarding ownership or special interest in any of the agenda items. Zoning Land Use Maps on display in Council Chambers for Zoning Advisory Board and Council hearings.

A. Beer Pouring License – Suhel Merchant D/B/A World of Wings

Tabled public hearing of a beer pouring license request by Suhel Merchant D/B/A World of Wings, at a location of 171 West Belmont Drive, Suite 7. The proposed store manager is Brittany O'Shields.

- Councilman Hammond made a motion to remove the item from the table. Mayor Pro Tem Barton gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.
- Mayor Palmer opened the public hearing.
- City Administrator Peterson stated that all legal requirements had been met.
- Mayor Palmer opened the floor for comments pertaining to the requested license. There were none.
- Mayor Palmer closed the public hearing.
- Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the alcohol license. Mayor Pro Tem Barton gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

B. 2017 Millage Rates-City of Calhoun and Calhoun City Schools

Public hearing of the proposed 2017 property tax millage rates for the City of Calhoun and Calhoun City Schools. The City of Calhoun proposed millage rate remains the same as 2012 through 2016 at 1.98. The Calhoun City Schools proposed millage rate remains the same as 2014 through 2016 at 17.985. The City of Calhoun current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years was advertised in the Calhoun Times on August 26th and 30th and available for review at www.cityofcalhoun-ga.com.

Streamed Live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH233HIK7oQ>

- Mayor Palmer opened the public hearing.
- City Administrator Peterson stated that all legal requirements had been met.
- Mayor Palmer opened the floor for comments. Mayor Pro Tem Barton stated that he felt it was impressive that the millage rates for both the City of Calhoun and Calhoun City Schools has not increased in several years. He felt this shows how diligent they have all been in trying to keep our tax dollars low and not spending frivolously.
- City Administrator Peterson stated that in 2014 Freeport exemptions were \$31 million. The current digest contains \$187 million in exemptions driven by Freeport. He stated that these were gigantic numbers, and the school system was even more. Our school system this year will lose half a million dollars because of Freeport. He stated this is an item that will have to be addressed in the future.
- Mayor Palmer closed the public hearing
- Dr. Michele Taylor, Superintendent of Calhoun City Schools stated that the top mandated millage rate for the school system is 20 mills. Councilman Hammond stated that we are low in comparison; however, we don't have a five to ten point spread to get to the 20 mills. Mayor Palmer stated that he was very thankful that we have community support of our schools.
- Councilwoman Palazzolo made a motion to approve the millage rates for the City of Calhoun and Calhoun City Schools. Councilman Hammond gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

Ordinance-Donation Collection Containers

- C. Public hearing of an ordinance to amend, strike or change certain articles, divisions and sections of Part II-Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22:Businesses, Article III: Regulatory Licenses and Business Regulations, Division 5: Recycling Processing Centers for the purchase, sale or processing of post-consumer or post-industrial materials to add section 22-322 prohibiting Donation Collection Containers throughout the City.
- Mayor Palmer opened the public hearing.
 - City Administrator Peterson stated that all legal requirements had been met.
 - Mayor Palmer opened the floor for comments and asked City Attorney Govignon if he had anything he would like to say regarding the ordinance. City Attorney Govignon stated that it makes no difference if it is a local 501(c)(3) or a for-profit. Councilman Hammond asked if we knew how many 501(c)(3)'s we have locally. Assistant City Administrator Worley stated that all 501(c)(3)'s have donation collections centers and would not be effected by the ordinance change. There were no other comments.
 - Mayor Palmer closed the public hearing and called for a motion on the ordinance change.

Streamed Live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH233HIK7oQ>

- Mayor Pro Tem Barton made a motion to approve the ordinance change. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

Ordinance-Building Heights

- D. Public hearing of an ordinance to amend, strike or change certain articles, divisions and sections of part II – Code of Ordinances; Appendix A: Zoning; to repeal all conflicting ordinances or ordinance provisions, to clarify certain language or definitions, and to increase maximum building heights for districts C-2 general business district, and Ind-G general industrial district to 75 feet.
- Mayor Palmer opened the public hearing.
 - City Administrator Peterson stated that all legal requirements had been met.
 - Mayor Palmer opened the floor for comments and asked City Attorney Govignon if he had anything he would like to say regarding the ordinance. City Attorney Govignon stated the change was primarily to decrease the number of variances being requested due to current hotel specifications from franchisees. There were no other comments.
 - Mayor Palmer closed the public hearing and called for a motion regarding the ordinance change.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Barton made a motion to approve the ordinance change. Councilman Edwards gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

Beer Package License-KS Food Mart

- E. Public hearing of a beer package license request by Muhammad Khawar A. Ansari D/B/A K S Food Mart, at a location of 461 Harris Beamer Road. Mr. Ansari will be the store manager.
- Mayor Palmer opened the public hearing.
 - City Administrator Peterson stated that all legal requirements had been met.
 - Mayor Palmer opened the floor for comments. Mayor Palmer stated the applicant had previously held a license in the D/B/A Ray's Grocery. There were no other comments.
 - Mayor Palmer closed the public hearing and called for a motion on the alcohol license.
 - Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the license. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

8. **Old Business**

A. **Charter Amendment – Municipal Court**

Second reading of an ordinance to amend the Charter of the City of Calhoun relating to the Municipal Court, for the incorporation of mandated changes in charter, Article VI, §6-101 *et seq.* To reflect new statutory elements enacted by Ga. L. 2016, pg. 367, § 2/HB 691 in direct conflict with the present terms of Article VI, § 6-102 regarding removal of municipal court judges from office for specific grounds; to provide for other matters relative thereto; to repeal conflicting sections of the charter of the City of Calhoun; and for other purposes. The public hearing will be held on October 9, 2017.

- City Attorney Govignon stated the purpose of the Charter Amendment was to comply with 2016 legislation and incorporate changes made due to the legislation.

9. **New Business**

Calhoun Recycling Coalition

- A. Moved to Mayor's Comments.

Road Closure-Relay For Life

- B. The Relay for Life planning committee requests permission to close Trammel Street from North Piedmont Street to North Wall Street and North Piedmont Street from the corner of East Line Street to the corner of Trammel Street for Relay for Life 2018. Closing times would be from 3 PM until 11 PM, Friday, May 4, 2018.

Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the request. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

C. **Surplus Property Request – 2005 Mack Granite CV713**

Request from the Waste Water Treatment Plant to declare a 2005 Mack Granite CV713, mileage 249,242 as surplus. VIN #1M2AG12C55M023363.

Councilman Edwards made a motion to approve the request. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

D. **Special Event Permit/Road Closure Request-Run for Your Life 5K**

Special event/road closure request by the Gordon Hospital Foundation for the annual "Run for Your Life 5K". The run is scheduled for Tuesday, October 24th with the race beginning at 6:00pm. The race route has changed this year and would start at Gordon Hospital, down 911 Blvd., on to Curtis Parkway, continue on to Devonwood, and finishing at Gordon Hospital.

Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the request. Mayor Pro Tem Barton gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

Streamed Live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH233HIK7oQ>

E. **Revolving Loan Advisory Committee Report – King Street Market**

Revolving Loan Advisory Committee report concerning a loan application by Denise Stripling, D/B/A: King Street Market/Over The Moon Events, at a location of 212 King Street North.

Councilman Hammond gave the report from the Revolving Loan Advisory Committee stating that the Committee had met on Friday, September 22nd to discuss the loan application. The applicant owns the antebellum home next to the post office. They do a catering service for many businesses in town and they are starting to prepare meals for the busy homemakers, the millennial, and for individuals who want a better cooked meal that is not fast food. As it was reviewed by the committee it was unanimous that the loan would be approved. The monies will be used for expansion and equipment modifications and will take us down to the DCA limit at around \$600,000. He stated the City was facing a hard deadline at the end of September. If the loans were not made then the money would have to be turned back over to the state of Georgia. This is money that is going into effect here in Calhoun, Georgia. He encouraged those present to look up King Street Market and Over The Moon Events on the internet and see if you can find it in your family's venue.

Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the loan at \$100,000, 2% interest, for 15 years. Mayor Pro Tem Barton gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

Mayor Pro Tem Barton asked city Administrator Peterson if the State had commented on Calhoun being one of the staples regarding use of the Revolving Loan Funds. City Administrator Peterson replied that the State has had people contact the City to find out how we do it. We've done it since the Clarence Harris days, creating over 600 jobs in Calhoun. He noted that Athens-Clarke County had called him recently and asked for our model. He stated that Calhoun has done it well, and with these two loans alone we should get the monies back down to about \$800,000, which is right on the cusp of our 30% of total assets, and if Bee Academy comes through we will be right at \$600,000.

Councilman Hammond stated that legal, as well as Mr. Peterson and Mr. Worley submitted a proposal from the Mayor and Council asking DCA to think about what is next. All of these loans were created on job creation. If you created a job you were able to borrow a certain amount of money. We've asked that be expanded to look at economic opportunities as we move into a changing downtown with downtown living, downtown dining, and entertainment. We like to see other ways to stimulate our economy. That letter will be signed and pushed to DCA and we should see shortly the next plan that needs to be copied and duplicated because of success that we are having here in Calhoun.

F. **Special Event Permit – Food Trucks & Friends**

Special Event Permit for United Way of Gordon County Young Leaders Society, in association with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Wall Street Grille.

Streamed Live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH233HIK7oQ>

The event, titled Food Truck's and Friends, will be held in the Depot parking lot on Thursday, November 2nd, 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Mayor Pro Tem Barton made a motion to approve the request. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

- G. **Temporary Outdoor Alcohol Special Event Permit – Food Trucks & Friends**
Temporary Outdoor Alcohol Special Event Permit for Wall Street Grille. This permit is in association with the Special Event Permit for United Way of Gordon County Young Leaders Society and the DDA, to allow the provision of alcohol by Wall Street Grille, currently holding a valid Class B beer and wine license for on-premise consumption. Wall Street Grille will apply for their Alcohol Special Event permit with the Georgia Department of Revenue upon City approval.

Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the permit. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

10. **Other written items not on the agenda**

Councilman Hammond reminded those present that the Chamber After Hours would be held at the Tom B. David Airport on October 3rd, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

Councilman Edwards notified Council members that he would be out of town and unable to attend the October 9th meeting of the City Council.

11. **Work reports**

12. **Motion to move to Executive Session, if needed**

None

13. **Motion to return to General Session**

None

14. **Motion to adjourn**

Mayor Pro Tem Barton made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye. Motion approved.

Approved:

Submitted:



James F. Palmer, Mayor



Sharon Nelson, CMC, City Clerk

CITY OF CALHOUN, GEORGIA
FIVE YEAR TAX DIGEST AND M&O LEVY HISTORY
2017 TAX DIGEST AND M&O LEVY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018

| TAX | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 PROPOSED |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Real and Personal | \$ 721,327,247 | \$ 742,504,573 | \$ 766,239,006 | \$ 833,337,690 | \$ 881,405,563 | \$ 875,723,106 |
| Motor Vehicles & Mobile Homes | 29,436,377 | 30,958,617 | 25,861,752 | 19,660,902 | \$ 15,489,072 | \$ 12,225,550 |
| Timber 100% | | | | | \$ 28,754 | |
| Heavy Duty Equipment | | | | | \$ 509,696 | \$ 902,510 |
| Gross Digest | \$ 750,763,624 | \$ 773,463,190 | \$ 792,100,758 | \$ 852,998,592 | \$ 897,433,085 | \$ 888,851,166 |
| Less Exemptions | 30,133,604 | 31,283,831 | 60,071,808 | 131,798,460 | \$ 168,935,178 | \$ 186,730,886 |
| Net M&O Digest | \$ 720,630,020 | \$ 742,179,359 | \$ 732,028,950 | \$ 721,200,132 | \$ 728,497,907 | \$ 702,120,280 |
| Gross M&O Millage | 5.04 | 5.15 | 5.19 | 5.27 | 5.06 | 5.179 |
| Less Rollback | -3.06 | -3.17 | -3.21 | -3.29 | -3.08 | -3.199 |
| Net M&O Millage | 1.98 | 1.98 | 1.98 | 1.98 | 1.98 | 1.98 |
| Net Taxes Levied | \$ 1,426,847 | \$ 1,469,515 | \$ 1,449,417 | \$ 1,427,976 | \$ 1,442,426 | \$ 1,390,198 |
| Net Tax \$-Increase/(Decrease) | 190,124 | 42,668 | (20,098) | (21,441) | 14,450 | (52,228) |
| Net Tax %-Increase/(Decrease) | 15.37% | 2.99% | -1.37% | -1.50% | 1.00% | -3.62% |

The Mayor and City Council does hereby announce that the millage rate for the City of Calhoun will be set at a meeting to be held at the Depot Community Room, 109 South King Street, Calhoun, Georgia on Monday September 25, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. and pursuant to the requirement of O.C.G.A. 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.

NOTICE
CALHOUN CITY SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Calhoun City School Board of Education does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held by the Mayor and Council of the City of Calhoun on September 25, 2017 at 7:00 PM at the Depot Community Room, 109 King Street, Calhoun, Georgia. The Board of Education pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.

ESTIMATED 2017 TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY

| TAX | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Real & Personal | 721,327,247 | 742,504,573 | 766,239,006 | 833,337,690 | 881,405,563 | 875,723,106 |
| Motor Vehicles | 29,380,890 | 30,903,130 | 25,860,220 | 19,659,370 | 15,487,540 | 12,221,830 |
| Mobile Homes | 55,487 | 55,487 | 1,532 | 1,532 | 1,532 | 3,720 |
| Timber - 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 28,754 | 0 |
| Heavy Duty Equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 509,696 | 902,510 |
| Gross Digest | 750,763,624 | 773,463,190 | 792,100,758 | 852,998,692 | 897,433,085 | 888,851,166 |
| Less M & O Exemptions | 63,328,842 | 66,018,502 | 96,052,917 | 170,496,341 | 208,254,581 | 229,399,412 |
| Net M & O Digest | 687,434,782 | 707,444,688 | 696,047,841 | 682,502,251 | 689,178,504 | 659,451,754 |
| Gross M & O Millage | 17.762 | 17.813 | 17.985 | 17.985 | 17.985 | 17.985 |
| Rollback | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Net M & O Millage | 17.762 | 17.813 | 17.985 | 17.985 | 17.985 | 17.985 |
| Total School Taxes Levied | \$12,210,217 | \$12,601,712 | \$12,518,420 | \$12,274,803 | \$12,394,875 | \$11,860,240 |
| Net Taxes \$ Increase | \$1,280,454 | \$391,496 | -\$83,292 | -\$243,617 | \$120,072 | -\$534,636 |
| Net Taxes % Increase | 11.72% | 3.21% | -0.66% | -1.95% | 0.98% | -4.31% |