

**CITY OF CALHOUN  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
DEPOT COMMUNITY ROOM  
109 SOUTH KING ST  
DECEMBER 19, 2016 7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

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

**ABSENT:** Al Edwards, Councilman

**ALSO:** Eddie Peterson, City Administrator; George Govignon, City Attorney; Paul Worley, City Clerk; Garry Moss, Police Chief; Lenny Nesbitt, Fire Chief; Jerry Crawford, Water and Sewer Director

1. Mayor Palmer called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.
  - A. Mayor Palmer gave the invocation.
2. Mayor Palmer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.
3. Mayor Palmer stated there were two annual business license renewals to be added to the agenda. Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilman Barton seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion approved.
4. Councilman Barton made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2016 City Council Meeting. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye, motion approved. Councilman Barton made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of the December 12, 2016 City Council Meeting. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye, motion approved.
5. **Mayor's Comments:**
  - A. The City of Calhoun offices will be closed on Friday December 23<sup>rd</sup> and Monday December 26<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas Holidays and Monday January 2<sup>nd</sup> for New Year's Day.
6. **Public Hearings and Comments:** None
7. **Old Business:**
  - A. Councilman Hammond made a motion to remove from the table the Calhoun-Gordon County Airport Authority Intergovernmental Agreement proposal. Councilman Barton gave a second with all voting aye, motion approved. Mayor Palmer welcomed everyone representing the Tom B. David Airport and called on Attorney Bill Thompson to address the Council. Mr. Thompson stated that he has worked with the Airport for about 20

years and the Mayor and Council have already seen a presentation concerning the Intergovernmental Agreement proposal. The State of Georgia is about to make a major commitment to the airport that will result in a big portion of the State's yearly aviation budget coming to our local airport. It is a safety related issue and it will be several million dollars that will be spent very quickly at the airport. Mr. Thompson stated that the group was here tonight for the second part to the airport future expansion plans. The airport has grown over the past few years and is the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> largest in based aircraft for the State. What the airport does not have is the ability to handle commercial large jet aircraft. The group is here for support of the Intergovernmental Agreement that includes the engineering, planning, and bidding to come up with a plan on where to put the new commercial hangers, how many hangers to build, and what the cost would be to build. The airport is requesting the City and the County to share those expenses for the bidding, which will be \$150,000 for both entities. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond asked Mr. Thompson to explain the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) commitment to the airport, and how that reimbursement of funds back to the City will be coming in more rapidly than first anticipated. Mr. Thompson stated that the State of Georgia receives about \$16-\$17 million dollars from FAA sources. They are about to commit half of the State's entire annual budget to our airport. The funding is going toward the taxiway project. The funding for the project will be 90% FAA, 5% City, and 5% County. This project will drive the airport to the next level. To go from 100 to 200 based aircraft shows us that our airport has the potential to double in size in the near future. Obtaining commercial traffic in our airport is a logical next step for the airport. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond stated that he had mentioned to the Council that he had discussed this with their County peers, and they said there would be a funding delay until the new budget is approved. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond asked if this timeline would be acceptable for the project. Mr. Thompson stated that timeline would be acceptable. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond stated that he was a member ex officio for the Airport Authority and asked Dwight Albritton to discuss a commitment by a jet service that would like to occupy one of the proposed hangers and what it could mean to the airport and community. Mr. Albritton stated that the airport has had request from several different companies that have charter jets. These charter jets are placed at different locations throughout the country at different hubs, so they can be close to people who would want to use them. Mr. Albritton stated that they had received a call from a company named Exec Jet that have a lot of medium to large jets, and they would like to place a medium size business jet at Calhoun. The jet would be there today, but Calhoun doesn't have a hanger big enough to house it. The company asked that once the airport has more firm plans to add the hangers or facilities they would need, just let them know because they want to be involved to place one of their jets in Calhoun. A lot of the metro area airport hangar space has built out and occupied or the costs are astronomical. The company is really looking to come to Calhoun. This is just one firm commitment, along with several other large companies that if the airport had the space they would be at Calhoun right now. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond asked if Calhoun had a jet of this size, what would we be receiving in ad valorem taxes, rental revenue, and fuel. Mr. Albritton stated that it would depend on the specific jet, but would probably be a minimum of \$50,000 in ad valorem taxes per year. Also, the jet fuel sales would be several thousand gallons per month. Fuel sales could be around \$30,000-\$50,000 per year just for that one jet. In addition, it would bring business owners and business leaders in and out of Gordon County. These are the people who could be opening new

businesses in our community. Ron Dobbs, Airport Authority Board Member, stated it creates jobs and above average paying jobs. Mr. Dobbs stated that he is a business man and this project is a no brainer. We will spend \$5 million dollars and the Federal Government will give us back 90%. This is a revenue project and we will pay for it with the revenues that will come in. It will create ad valorem tax, it creates more jobs, it creates more fuel sales, and the airport is the gateway into our community. Usually, all the industry that comes into Calhoun and Gordon County sees our airport first. Our location is great and we need to be able to handle these larger jets and we will be paid back several times over. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond stated that it was his understanding that the Airport has presented this project to the City Council, the County Commissioners, and the Industrial Development Authority. All three of these groups see this as a next step in economic activity for our community. Mayor Palmer asked for a motion. Councilman Hammond made a motion to move ahead with the engineering project with the authority being granted to Mr. Peterson to meet with Mr. King, Gordon County Administrator, and come up with a time table for budgeting and revenue streams to make this project a go. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second, with all voting aye, motion approved. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond stated that Councilman Edwards was not able to attend the Council meeting, but he did call this afternoon and stated that he supported the project.

- B. Mayor Palmer conducted the second reading of a building height variance for North Georgia Hotel Developers at a location of 1007 E Hwy 53 SE. The applicant is requesting to exceed the maximum building height of 50 feet per the zoning code and to allow a proposed hotel building up to a height of 70 feet. The ZAB will meet on January 5th and the public hearing will be on January 9th.

**8. New Business:**

- A. Mayor Palmer conducted the following annual business license renewal readings.

Beer & Wine Pouring

- Classic Kitchen

Beer Pouring

- That Place

Beer Package

- Food Mart & Tobacco
- Quick Stop
- San Marcos Market

Pawn

- Complete Cash Discount Title Pawn

After the reading of the annual license renewals, Councilman Hammond made a motion to approve the renewal requests. Councilman Barton gave a second with all voting aye, motion approved.

**9. Other written items not on the agenda:**

**10. Work Reports:**

**A. Administrator Eddie Peterson**

- Administrator Peterson reviewed the General Government monthly cash report with the general fund in a good cash position. The City's total reserves are at \$622,214 and reserves held in investments are \$3.4 million, which gives us a total of about \$4 million. The City's reserves continue to allow for three months total operations, which is consistent with the Financial Policy. The City property taxes collections are at about 70% with a few large payers waiting until the last week to pay. Also, some dollars have been spent since July that were not budgeted, but were needed and hard to turn down. Yellow Jacket Drive has been milled and resurfaced and GDOT funded the project with \$30,000 and the City had to pay an unbudgeted amount of \$18,000. There were three HVAC units at the Library that needed replacing at a cost of \$47,000, but the State will be paying for half of that project. The City's design guideline project is about \$40,000, which was also not budgeted. There have been HVAC problems at the McConnell Center and the entire system was replaced for \$12,000. Also, additional expenses with Walker vs. the City of Calhoun lawsuit that is not budgeted. Finally, the City has committed \$200,000 to go toward the Calhoun City School's auditorium renovation project. All these expenses need to be kept in mind as we go forward. In the current budget, we have \$65,000 budgeted for a city planner position that will likely not be needed in this fiscal year. Also, there is \$98,000 in the Mayor and Council contingency fund. These two items gives us a total of \$163,000 that could be used toward the extra expenses. The City is also working on dilapidated houses and hopefully we will have more movement on that in the next few weeks. Attorney Govignon stated that 204 Hunts Drive will be handled on January 23, 2017. That was filed today and the notices will go out. Attorney Govignon stated that December 31<sup>st</sup> will be his last official day of being the prosecutor for Juvenile Court after resigning. Having that extra time on Monday's will allow him to focus on the dilapidated housing. The Hunts Drive property has been an issue mentioned several times so the hearing will be at the regularly scheduled Municipal Court meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. There are other properties that have been done before that just need updating. There are several properties in the Mill Village, but there are some issues with titles being transferred around in the last year, so some title searches will be needed. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond asked Administrator Peterson to discuss how the City is considering utilizing a private company to assist in delinquent property tax collection. Administrator Peterson stated that Gordon County and many cities around the state are utilizing private companies to assist in collecting delinquent taxes. The City is looking at going after delinquent taxes from 2015 back and for the private service to come in and assist with that process. State law permits all the administrative costs to be passed on to the delinquent tax payer, so it will not cost the City anything. We have some people and businesses that use the City as their bank. This is unfair to all the rest of the citizens who do pay their property taxes on a timely basis.

The City will be meeting with the private service in the next few weeks about getting that set up. Mayor Pro Tem Hammond stated that this method is being used by many cities and counties across the State.

11. City Attorney Govignon stated that there was a need to go into executive session with the grounds being attorney/client privilege due to possible litigation [O.C.G.A. 50-14-2] concerning the Red Bud Road interchange lighting. Councilman Hammond made a motion to go into executive session. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye, motion approved.
12. Councilman Hammond made a motion to adjourn the executive session. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye, motion approved.
13. Councilman Hammond made a motion to return to regular session. Councilwoman Palazzolo gave a second with all voting aye, motion approved. There was nothing to report from the Executive Session.
14. Councilman Hammond made a motion to adjourn the regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Palazzolo with all voting aye, motion approved.


Approved:

Submitted:



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James F. Palmer, Mayor



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Paul Worley, City Clerk

**STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF GORDON  
CITY OF CALHOUN  
AFFIDAVIT REGARDING CLOSURE OF OPEN MEETINGS**

Personally appeared before the undersigned officer, duly authorized under the laws of the State of Georgia to administer oaths, James F. Palmer, Mayor, who in his capacity as Chairperson or the person presiding over a City Council meeting of the City of Calhoun and after being first duly sworn, certifies under oath and states to the best of his knowledge and belief the following:

At its meeting held on 12-19-16 the Council's Executive Session voted to go into closed session and exclude the public from all or a portion of its meeting. The legal exceptions applicable to the exempt matters addressed during such closed meeting are as follows (Check or initial, as appropriate:)

- Discussing or deliberating upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action, dismissal, periodic evaluation or rating of a government officer or employee. [O.C.G.A §50-14-3(6)]
- Privileged consultation with legal counsel pertaining to pending or threatened litigation, claims, administrative proceedings or settlements. [O.C.G.A §50-14-2]
- Discussing the future acquisition of real estate, authorize negotiations to purchase, dispose of, or lease property. [O.C.G.A §50-14-3(b)]
- Staff meetings for investigative purposes under duties or responsibilities imposed by law. [O.C.G.A §50-14-3(1)]
- Tax matters made confidential by state law. [O.C.G.A §50-14-2]
- Inspection of physical facilities under the jurisdiction of the City Council. [O.C.G.A §50-14-1(a)(2)]
- Meeting with a governing body, officer, agent or employee of another agency at a location outside the geographical jurisdiction of the City Council at which no final action is taken. [O.C.G.A §50-14-1(a)(2)]
- Other (Explanation and citation to statutory authority required:)

*I certify that the subject matter of the closed meeting or the closed portion of this meeting was devoted to matters of official business or policy within the exceptions provided by law as set forth above.*

Paul Wallace  
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Witness

James F. Palmer  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James F. Palmer, Mayor

Sworn to and subscribed to before  
me this 28 day of  
November, 2016.



Misty Caudle  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public for the State of Georgia