

**City of Walnut Grove City Council Meeting**

**Thursday, April 10, 2014**

**7:00 P.M.**

**Walnut Grove Community Building**

**1021 Park Street**

**Loganville, GA**

Council Present: Kathy Dimsdale  
Wayne Dimsdale  
Carol Witcher

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Lamar Lee at 7:00 P.M.

**II. Invocation**

Invocation was given by Joe Reitman.

**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

**IV. Agenda Approval**

A motion was made by Wayne Dimsdale to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Carol Witcher. There was no further discussion. All were in Favor. The motion was carried.

**V. Public Comment**

Mayor Lee asked for public comments. Mary Hall spoke of her love of this community and as a volunteer in the community would like to hold Council accountable to do the will of the people and release the \$60,000 that the Library Board of Trustees requests for funding the Walnut Grove Library for this fiscal year as well as future funding.

**VI. Approval of Minutes from March 13, 2014 City Council Meeting**

A motion was made by Wayne Dimsdale and seconded by Kathy Dimsdale to approve the minutes as published. There was no further discussion. All were in Favor. The motion was carried.

**VII. Public Works Report**

There was no public works report as the Mayor mentioned that the city has no public works director at this time.

**VII. Financial Report**

The Deputy City Clerk provided the March financial report for all accounts. Carol Witcher made the motion to approve the financial report as given and published. The motion was seconded by Wayne Dimsdale. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.

## **IX. Clerk's Report**

The Deputy City Clerk presented the clerk's report as follows:

The City issued 3 New Business Licenses  
The ball field was rented 18 times  
The pavilion was rented on 2 occasions  
There were no permits issued  
Walton Co Sheriff's Office issued 15 citations  
Georgia State Patrol issued 12 citations

## **X. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Lee advised Council that the city would be meeting with the owners of Corn Dawgs soon to plan a festival.

The sewer system project is on target and bids are being prepared at this time.

The city has hired a new auditor, Ken Neil.

The pavilion has been repainted and bathrooms upgraded.

The next municipal meeting will be on Thursday, April 17, 2014 at Robinson's Barbeque in Monroe, Ga.

The council needs to be in thought on a date for planning the next fiscal year budget and get back with the Mayor next week.

The Mayor expressed his desire for having a planning session before each council meeting.

Next week is Georgia Cities Week.

## **XII. New Business**

### **(A) Library Funding**

Stephanie Shrack, member of the Library Board of Trustees since 2008, began the discussion by reminding the council of the 2010 Resolution that Allowed the city the \$250,000 grant from the state to build and furnish the library. Her interpretation was that it included operation as it stated \$60,000 per year would be used for future funding. In April 2013, this council started talking about cutting funds. The city then cut funding for the library by 75% (15,000) for 2014 and did not inform the board of trustees of this cut. When the \$15,000 was received by the board, Don Cannon attempted to reach out to Mayor Lee. In the March 13, 2014 council meeting, the council promised to burn the midnight oil to come up with the shortfall but as of now, none of that money has been given to the library. Without a swift action by the council members and mayor, the Walnut Grove library will have to cut service hours and worker hours. Tim Baker, another Board of Trustee member, spoke about only two issues being involved in the library issue. One was whether there was a

commitment made by the city to fund operations for the library and two, is the money there to provide that support. He referred back to the Resolution in 2010 about the commitment and mentioned that insurance tax premium for funding. He says that the answer to both of those questions is yes. He also mentioned the Walton Tribune articles and they had upset the city officials because they were factual. Mr. Baker said that the Board of Trustees has reached out to the Mayor and Council but that no one has responded. The cut in funding from 60,000 to 15,000 is unprecedented in the state of Georgia and even the \$38,500 offered in the Resolution now being offered is 36% less and still unprecedented. His hope is that the library will remain a service outlet until a Pro-Library administration is in office.

Joe Reitman said that it was not factual that the present officials were not Pro-library. Proof of this commitment lies in addition to monies already given the library, the city was, in fact, paying \$36,000 a year additionally to a loan secured for the property on which the library resides. The original discussion regarding the library was named as a Library Project, nothing mentioned future operations. Mr. Reitman went through the Resolution of Support for the Walnut Grove Library that was handed out and focused on the following points:

- i. The fact that the citizens of Walnut Grove, which makes up 1.5 square miles, supports an entity that serves up to 50.27 square miles and represent approximately 10% of the citizen library population.
- ii. The economic downturn and fiscal conservatism have brought the city to where it is now with less funds available to the library. The auditors require a reasonable reserve for unforeseen events such as the 2 road cave-ins that have warranted a great deal of money for repairs. With limited funds, there could be discussion of a millage rate tax if it be the will of the people to cover full funding. The city could consider a questionnaire being sent out with utility billing to discover the wishes of the citizens of the city.
- iii. The 2010 Resolution designated \$60,000 of insurance premium tax to the Walnut Grove Library Board to fund the library project, not for operations. The Uncle Remus financial report dated June 30, 2013 indicates \$60,000 funding from Walnut Grove to support 50 hours a week operations while law only requires 30 hours a week and the city never asked for 50 hours a week. A report by the Deputy City Clerk shows that an average of 16 to 17 cars per day comprises the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The focus of hours of operation would probably benefit students the most. Mr. Reitman suggested 2-7 week day hours and Saturday.

- iv. Uncle Remus does not enter into contracts with municipalities despite Georgia code 36-10-1 that requires contracts be in writing.
- v. Existing service delivery agreement shows payment from the general fund, funded by different taxes, special funds, etc. which under state policy do not count toward Maintenance of Effort, therefore there is no MOE default.
- vi. The council has agreed to match funds raised by the library from other sources, i.e. School system, state, non-profits and donors up to \$10,000.

Don Cannon mentioned that fund from the \$400,000 reserve were consolidated and used to pay off construction of the parkway due to SPLOST fund that were not received and this is lumped in with the 36,000 payment the city makes on that loan yearly.

The floor was opened up for public discussion and Guy Hall, another trustee, expressed disappointment that there has been silence from the council and mayor and that only the city lawyer is speaking now on the matter. Elected officials are who the people want to hear from. Joe Reitman suggested that it would be in the best interest of the matter for the council and mayor to meet with the board of trustees, as soon as feasible, in a public manner to resolve the matter. Wayne Dimsdale said that, as a proponent of the library, he and other members did not open the library only to close. But the council and mayor have a fiduciary responsibility to the people of the city and must maintain roads, etc. with a balanced budget to adhere. The council is about to go through a new budget and then we can see where the city is at for future funding. Carol Witcher agreed that the library is needed in this community and that it was never the intention of council to close the library. Only under the circumstances of misaligned policy or misuse would she ever be in favor of something like that. The money that the city operates on belongs to the people of Walnut Grove and each council member has to be diligent with it. Mayor Lee said he would reserve comment for the meeting with the Board of Trustees. A citizen suggested that the council table the new resolution until the meeting as well. Tim Baker said that he also felt that would be in everyone's best interest. Monday, April 21, 2014 at 6:30 pm in the community center will be when this meeting takes place. The public is welcome to attend. A motion was made by Carol Witcher to table to resolution. This was seconded by Wayne Dimsdale. All members were in favor. The motion was carried.

**(B) Raven Harris: WGHS sponsorship for Key Club Convention**

Ms. Witcher introduced Ms. Harris and Mrs. Mitchell from WGHS and said that while she realizes the council cannot fund a personal request, she is asking the citizens to support this star student in her endeavors. Mrs. Mitchell spoke of Ms. Harris' many gifts and awards and that she is in need of \$1,500 to make the trip to Anaheim California for the national

Key Convention. Ms. Harris feels that this trip will enable her to be a better leader for her community. Mayor Lee told Ms. Harris to come visit city hall next week to discuss possible support from the members personally. Wayne Dimsdale asked all in attendance to applaud Ms. Harris as a shining star from the school as well as her father and grandmother. They received standing ovation.

**(C) Sponsorship of WGHS Cheerleader T-Shirts \$967.59**

Motion was made by Wayne Dimsdale and seconded by Carol Witcher to approve payment. No further discussion. All in Favor. Motion was carried.

**(D) Approval of Adcock Lawn Care Contract for Lawn Care**

with

Wayne Dimsdale made the motion to privatize the grass maintenance Adcock and Carol Witcher seconded the motion. No further discussion. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

**(E) Removal of Tree – Greenhill Way - Scarborough Tree - \$1,150.00**

Wayne Dimsdale made motion accept this proposal. Motion was seconded by Carol Witcher. No further discussion. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

**(F) Comcast - \$594.30 monthly, \$307.65 one time installation**

Wayne Dimsdale made motion accept this proposal. Motion was seconded by Kathy Dimsdale. Wayne asked for clarification on savings from present carrier. Mayor Lee stated that it would save the city approximately \$500 per month. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

**(G) GIRMA –Annual Renewal of Property/Liability \$15,222.00**

Carol Witcher made motion accept this proposal. Motion was seconded by Wayne Dimsdale. Mayor Lee mentioned that this was \$160 less than last year. Discussion made as to how to pay in installments. Ms. Witcher suggested the city pay as it had in the past with two monthly installments. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

**(H) Lambert, Reitman and Abney Invoices (\$58.14 and 751.79)**

Wayne Dimsdale made motion to pay these invoices. Motion was seconded by Carol Witcher. No further discussion. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

**(I) Precision Planning Invoice (\$1,850.62)**

Wayne Dimsdale made motion pay this invoice. Motion was seconded by Carol Witcher. No further discussion. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

## **XII. Council Comments**

Carol Witcher expressed gratitude to be part of a city that can discuss issues with each other in a civilized manner on matters such as the library funding and that each council person wants to work in the best interest of the city.

Mayor Lee thanked everyone for attending the meeting and would like to see this crowd for every council meeting.

**IX. Adjourn**

Motion made by Wayne Dimsdale to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Kathy Dimsdale.

All in Favor. Motion Carried. Meeting Adjourned at approximated 8:45 pm.

Approved by the Mayor and Council this 8<sup>th</sup> day of May 2014.



**Mayor, Lamar Lee**



**Deputy City Clerk, Sharon Bell**