

Walnut Grove City Council
Thursday, September 13, 2018

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Mayor Lamar Lee
Carol Witcher
Linda Pilgrim
Mark Moore
Kevin Schultz

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Lamar Lee

II. INVOCATION

Invocation given by Carol Witcher

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All stood for Pledge of Allegiance

IV. AGENDA APPROVAL

Kathy Glass- Clerk ask to amend the agenda to allow Roger Singleton with Silk Saver to address the Council under New Business. Kevin Schultz made a motion to amend the agenda, Linda Pilgrim seconded the motion, motion carried. Kevin Schultz ask the Mayor to go back and take a vote on the Agenda Approval. Mayor Lee ask for a Motion, Kevin Schultz made a motion to approve and Linda Pilgrim seconded that motion, motion carried.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lisa Whitehead from 4970 Old Hwy 138, I have a few comments in regard to the area of Walnut Grove especially when you come into the city. The house at Hwy 138 and Old Hwy 138 it is actually in the Peninsula. . I'm not sure if you are familiar with what I am talking about. It is in front of the Day Care Center. I know that previously you guys had voted to change the zoning from residential to commercial and it went back and forth for years. I understand that somebody else has bought it. They are suppose to be fixing it up, they have taken out windows and so forth and it has become a dump. The grass is tall and it has become a nuisance to our property value on our street. A couch has setting out there for 6 months, it has finally been

removed. There is a dumpster that sets out there. I think that somebody lives there from time to time. There is a car that sits out there, and you can go by at 2:00 a.m. and it is there and then it sets there days and day and then it disappears. Then it is gone for a couple of days and then it is back. I would like that addressed.

I would also like to find out what the plans are for Corn Dawgs, when you first approach Corn dawgs it is a horrible issue with the grass, the grass is high in the gully. I noticed that it was just recently cut. It was not cut by Corn Dawgs, it was not cut by the City I think that it was cut by the people who ran the gas line. And I understand that they are not opening Corn Dawgs that they are just having the Rodeo, are they going to leave the bleachers up all year? The tent up there is looking really shabby. Is that going to stay up another year? It looks really bad to our community as you enter Walnut Grove. Then you have the nuisance of the house right pass Corn Dawgs and the fire dept on the right hand side. The Mayor lives right next door to it, he keeps his truck sitting out front with a lot of trash on it. And I know the mayor has to live right next door to him but how long is this going to go on? Something needs to be done. The other issue I have is with April's Rose Garden and I know the Mayor and I had a conversation in his office over a year ago. The lady lives in that property, it is zoned commercial for business, she lives in the business next to it which is not zoned residential. You can go by there at 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning and her cars are always there. There are all kinds of signs out there, she never has fresh flowers. She always says that they will be in tomorrow. I don't know what she does there. It is her business, I guess she can do whatever she wants. She has her dog there and every time you drive up he comes out and attacks you. It is a nuisance. That is all I have to say.

VI. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 9, 2018 AND CALLED MEETING SEPT. 6, 2018

Mark Moore made a Motion to Approve the minutes, Linda Pilgrim seconded the motion, carried.

VII. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Alan Barton Public works director said that a culvert caved in on Forester Cemetery Rd. The County came out and fixed that. The walk way has been poured for the crosswalk. I have not got in touch with Wildcat Striping she was on vacation last week so she will get back in touch With me. Crosswalk signs will be ordered and put up by our city guys. Ms. Pilgrim I think you Had a question about a water problem with the crosswalk. She responded, like I said maybe it Was before ya'll had finished but, I came by there and it was flooded and there was water puddled on it. The water comes off the hill and the backside of Emerald Cove. There is no ditch down there and it has no where to go. It takes a little time for it to drain out unless you put a culvert in. The only way to fix it is to spend about \$20,000 . That is something that we will have to live with. I also have another question, when we became a tree city did we get signs to put up. I have one up at City Hall on the old barn out there. The other is in the back of my truck. I haven't decided where to put it yet. If ya'll have any ideas I would be glad to put it there.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT

The financials are in your book, does anyone have any questions. Councilman Mark Moore answered I have some questions. In two months time we have gone from a 30,000 positive to a 13,000, negative. Clerk - Kathy Glass ask where, if you look at the financials given to me on 7/9 our net income shows a 30,661.05 and on 9/13 there is a negative of 13,289.00. Councilwoman Carol Witcher ask what column are you looking at. Councilman Mark Moore- I am looking at the bottom line right now if you look at the net income at the bottom of the financials go all the way to the last sheet to the end there is still a negative balance of 13,289.00. Now if you go back you will see on 6/11 there was a balance of 23,226.00 and I don't see 7/2 in here. Please steer me in the right direction if it is in this book. We received the financials three days prior this month we had a little glitch and so this is the first time that I have seen them. Because what was sent to us is a little bit different. Council woman Linda Pilgrim says she has a total of 30,861.00. Council man Mark Moore and now we are showing a negative balance of 13,289.00. What I am asking for is a kind of a clear picture of how that could happen, Councilwoman Carol Witcher said your going to have to explain the clear picture to me because I don't get it. Well how did we loose 40,000.00, I don't think we lost 40,000.00 but, are you speaking to Council or are you speaking to the public. Either way they are asking us to go over these financials, I haven't had anyone to ask me about this and I happen to sit on this council as well. So can you explain why we have a deficit of 13,000 no. I haven't look at this until just a few minutes ago but, you can explain it to us can you? No that is what I am asking for, well tell us what you think. I don't know that is why I am asking for. That is what a question is for, I know what questions are I know that very well. Council woman Linda Pilgrim said there is nothing wrong with asking a question if you need clarification. Councilman Mark Moore - I have a lot of clarifications I think we need to have a work session to go over this budget on the daily operations of the city because I quite frankly I am starting to question the mileage rate. It hit me Quite hard and it hit some of my customers quite hard and I am not sure we actually need it. We ended the year in a positive then why are we asking the residents to pay even more? Council woman Witcher said they have never paid city tax before. Council man Mark Moore said well they will be. Council woman Carol Witcher because of all the things we have to do in this city , we can't do it on nothing we have to have a tax rate so that we can do what needs to be done to keep it going. You should have ask that question in the meeting that we had. We had a workshop do you remember that? Councilman Mark Moore -We had a question on the mileage rate and I was led to believe that this city was in desperate need of financial support and we needed to pass a 6% which is hitting our residents quite hard. Council woman Carol Witcher, I reserved the right to ask my question again, did you bring this up in the meeting we had down here last week or week before last? Council woman, Linda Pilgrim, no because we did not have these numbers last week. Councilman Mark Moore- I agree with Ms. Pilgrim we did not have these numbers last week, we do now and I am starting to see some pretty good accounts that I want to find out what there for and whether or not we need this tax. So I am asking that we have a work session so we can see why we went from a 30,000 plus to 14,000 negative., and what the actual operating cost of this city is. Now my other question is why did we have 10,000 last year spent in training? Council woman Witcher, training is mandatory by the State of Georgia Councilman Moore, I agree with you and I have done a lot of research on that, there are classes that are mandatory for new city council members and there are classes that are mandatory for City clerks but, I am looking

at a lot of elective training that is not mandatory that people are going to. So I question this training. Councilman Kevin Schultz, Which training are you referring to, because I have not attended one training class other than the initial one. When you say people are you addressing the whole city council or are you addressing one person who likes to go to further their education to better assist the city.

Councilman Mark Moore, The question I have on that training is I have ask for a breakdown of who hasn't taken training? I have yet to receive it yet. We did take training in Savannah and it was very beneficial but, that doesn't account for a third of the money spent on training here. Council Woman- Carol Witcher-Lets stop this right now because I can read it to you scripture and verse and I am ready, I am the one that he is talking about because I find it necessary as a city council person to be as informed as I can. This is what I have done since the day that I was elected so just bear with me because it is going to be lengthy so if you need to stand up and take a break feel free.

New Elected Official Institute – 6 hrs.

Municipal Court Clerks and promoting justice and protection – 3 hrs.

Municipal Finance- 6 hrs.

Municipal Taxation the basic- 3 hrs.

Municipal Water and Wastewater systems 3-hrs.

Open meetings- 3hrs.

Open Records- 3hrs.

Planning and zoning – 6hrs.

Practices for successful meetings- 3 hrs.

Public policy development and Invotation - 3 hrs.

Public

Roles and Responsibility of Council and Staff-3 hrs.

The Robert E. Knox Jr. Municipal Institute which is almost a honorary institute- 6hrs.

Municipal Court post Ferguson 2- 3hrs.

Municipal Taxation 102 basics continued- 3 hrs.

Creating a down town renaissance advancement DDA training 6 hrs.

Critical Issues, arts and economic developments-3 hrs

Critical Issues and Municipal law update 2017- 3 hrs.

Effective practices for Municipal operations 011- 3hrs.

Day economic development class- 12 hrs.

Service delivery, strategy, efficiency and tax equality for local government. 6 hrs.

Trends and Urban design. 3 hrs

How to Brand and Market my city- 3hrs.

In ethics I have 6 hrs with 6 more coming next week.

In Human Resources I have 6 hrs.

I have a total study of 99 hours from the state of Georgia in learning how to be the efficient government person that I want to be. It is only to the betterment of the city. Yes I go to Savannah and I have been every year that I have been on city council. I have never charged the city a penny of gasoline. I am very well educated he has what 3 hours, 6 hours? Councilman Mark Moore I have taken three hours in my first year. We have made a point to try to finance this library that is a very important part of our community. Five thousand dollars of that and this training would have approved that budget for that

library that they so desperately need. If we would have moved it from one to the other we could afford it. Councilwoman Carol Witcher, I am the one person here who has stood up on this council previous and this council here and voted in every way possible to save this library and put the library in good function. You are talking way out of turn, Councilman Mark Moore, no then you cannot deny that it would be a better source of revenue for the city to move that \$5000.00 from the one to the other. Councilwoman Carol Witcher Yes I can stand up and argue with that, this needs to be done by every one setting up here on this council. We should all strive to receive the top award and be recognized as a city of value and worth in this council. You will not tell me how I will educate myself on this on this budget or what I do for this city in education ,don't even try. And if that goes for you it also goes for you. I am not going to stand up here and listen to this bull crap of financing the library because you don't want to finance this city council of which you are now a new member of to become anything other than educated, this state demands that we do this and I am going to do what the state says I don't give a rats ass who you are. Council woman -Linda Pilgrim so all of these classes are required by the state. Oh and to make you a real happy camper I went up to Chateau Elon in July for classes that are on here, no I did not stay overnight, I came back home. And you nor nobody else in this city is going to tell me how much education I am going to have if I am going to serve on this committee . Councilman Mark Moore, I am not arguing, I am simply saying how do we save five thousand dollars off of this years budget. Councilwoman Carol Witcher, I am tired of it, I am tired of you always making any window about somebody else on this council. Nobody on this council with the exception of you and Linda Pilgrim have a personal agenda in anyway. Linda Pilgrim- Now there is nothing wrong with this training but, listen what we are saying is that we could manage there money a little better. If it says doesn't say that it has to be taken by end of July, Councilwoman Carol Witcher the money for the library has been provided, there is no reason for you to talk to me about training, get over talking to me to about training. I am the one being trained it is for me it is for everybody sitting out there and I am going to continue to do it. We have aloted the money in our budget to do it, and I am damn well going to do it and if you don't like it and he don't like it get your ass off of council. He is the one criticizing me for going, he can sit up here and say this one and that one and it is me he is demanding on and it won't continue. Enough of it was enough, there was never a problem before you and him came on board but, now it is nothing but a continual argument and a fuss and fight, I am not your puppy to play with. Council woman Carol Witcher made a motion to approve the financials Councilman Kevin Schultz, made a motion to table the Financial Report until October 4th. Council Mark Moore seconded the motion, motion carried.

IX. CLERK'S REPORT

Given by: Katherine Clerk

X. CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Out tonight, he is working.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

I don't have a whole lot to talk about right now, a lot going on but I will tell you later, oh and we got our first check for taxes this week from the county. That is all I have right now.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

Roger Singleton, with Silt Saver spoke to the council about a green space tax exemption. Mike Malcom let him know that if he was asking for rezoning it would have to be ran in the paper and have a public forum meeting, other words we can't change our zoning without going through the law or the state law. Roger ask the city council if they would allow the city attorney to look into this and they all agreed. Councilman Kevin Schultz ask if we need to put this back on the agenda for another day. City Attorney Mike Malcom suggested after they talk that Mr. Singleton call and have it put on the agenda for another night.

XIV. DISCUSSION ITEM

NONE

XV. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Kevin Schultz: Good to be back after my daughter has a pretty severe head injury, Appreciate all the prayers that the community has been given to my family thank you all.

Mark Moore: Good to have a full council tonight and if anyone has any comments please let me know.

Linda Pilgrim: Tuesday on 9/11 I attended the High School appreciation for the first responders, I was honored to represent the city, I have been here since 1972 raised all three of my boys here. The school raised money that night and gave a \$1600.00 donation to the officer in Covington who was shot. So I think they did an awesome job and I was proud to be a part of it.

Carol Witcher: I apologize to no one for seeking an education. I am a educator, I have been an educator for 31 years. This town is my heart and soul, serving on this council is my heart and soul. I am not going to sit in front of you as a group of people thinking that I am ignorant that I don't know what I am doing and that I don't know what I am saying. I am going to my classes to maintain the integrity of this city and this council. So if anyone wants to know where I am, on the 25th I will be up in the mountains attending class again and I will continue this until I finish my entire course of everything. I represent this city as best as I can, always stepping up and stepping out and taking my classes and being recognized by the people and the State and other parts of the state. It is vitally important that we do not isolate ourselves in one little corner of Georgia. That we continually put this city in front of other people in a very good viable way. And there is not one person who can sitting in this room or in this state of Georgia can say that Carol D. Witcher has not stood the course and done the right thing for this town and not for my satisfaction. Thank you to those who voted for me and I will continue to do the same thing and will do it

until the day that I am no longer on Council. Anyone up here has the same right that I do to take these classes. And by the way city councilman down there and city councilwoman right here have not taken there State mandated classes yet. That is a requirement when you are put on council on any part of this state.

ADJOURN:

Motion made by Kevin Schultz to adjourn, seconded by Mark Moore,
Motion passed.

Time: 7:53 P.M.

Mayor Lee

Kathrine A. Glass, Clerk
