

**Walnut Grove City Council**  
**Thursday August 8, 2019**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**Present**

Mayor Lamar Lee  
Mark Moore  
Linda Pilgrim  
Kevin Schultz  
Carol Witcher  
Atty. Jesse Couch

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Lamar Lee called the meeting to order.

**II. INVOCATION**

Given by Carol Witcher

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All Stood for the pledge of allegiance.

**IV. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Kevin Shultz made a motion to approve agenda, Carol Witcher seconded the motion, motion passed.

**V. Public Comment**

**Jim Corasaniti** - resides in Gratis and owns two pieces of property in Walnut Grove, 4571 and 4581 Old Hwy 138. Mr. Corasaniti said both the driveways on his properties should have been fixed ten years ago and still need to be fixed.

**VI. MINUTES APPROVAL JULY 11, 2019 & July 23, 2019**

Motion made by Mark Moore to approve both sets of minutes, seconded by Linda Pilgrim. Motion passed.

**VII. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT**

Given by Public Works Director Alan Barton. He spoke with Dr. Callahan at Walnut Grove High School, about a sign permit. The Senior Class is presenting the school with a brick sign. Alan told Dr. Callahan the sign had to be put on school property and not on the right of way. He spoke with Councilwoman Pilgrim about a light that needed to be fixed in the City and he contacted Walton EMC and they fixed it. She also told Alan a resident in Magnolia Estates was complaining about the City public works staff cutting grass in the small park in Magnolia Estates. The resident complained about someone's grass being cut for free from City. Alan said there are no pins there to tell where the lines are at the park. So, he took it upon himself about three years ago to bush hog it where the kids would have a place to play since no one else was keeping it up. So, now I guess since

we don't have any property lines and the City does not want to be accused of cutting some one's grass for free we will let the residents in Magnolia Estates cut the grass from now on.

**VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Motion made by Councilman Moore to approve the financial report, seconded by Councilman Shultz, motion passed.

**IX. CLERK'S REPORT**

Clerk Katherine A. Glass gave a report on all the activity during the month of July.

**X. CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT**

Grant Satterfield, Code Enforcement Officer, was not present.

**XI. MAYOR'S REPORT**

Nothing to report this month.

**XII. OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. Cul-de-sac at Emerald Cove:** Alan Barton spoke with Ray, the assistant to the director, with Walton County Public Works about the project at Emerald Cove in the cul-de-sac. He asked Alan to furnish him with a list of what the City wants the County to help with. Stephanie Moncrief was supposed to get a letter from the HOA in Emerald Cove approving the City to move forward with taking the round-a-bout out. **Councilman Shultz** made a motion to move forward, **Councilman Moore** seconded the motion, motion carried. The amount must be voted on when we hear from Walton County Public Works.

**B. Tree Removal off Park St**

Alan Barton, Director of Public Works, addressed the Council on this issue. He stated the first of the trees are down. There were four other trees identified but the City Clerk called and polled the Council and they were against taking them down. Alan Barton had the City Clerk get in contact with Jimmy Park at Precision Planning and he is going to put the bids out for straightening the creek, fixing the bank and putting in the riff raff. **Councilman Shultz** made a motion to table this until we could hear back from Precision Planning, **Linda Pilgrim** seconded the motion, motion passed.

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

**a. Approve Millage Rate @ 5.752**

**Councilman Shultz** - made a motion to set the millage rate at 5.752 **Councilwoman Witcher** seconded the motion. **Councilman Shultz, Councilwoman Witcher and Pilgrim** voted yes, and Councilman Moore voted against the motion. Motion passed.

**XIV. DISCUSSION ITEM:** None

**XV. COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

**Mark Moore-** I have been working on this Millage rate for three months. I do bring it up in every work session trying to get this reduced to three. We have discussed numbers, so this is not something that is a surprise to anyone. I feel strongly that 6 percent is an over tax to our citizens, and I think is an unjustified tax. So, with that being said, I do appreciate the faces that I see out here today and thank ya'll for the support that you give to your City and if there is anything I can do for you please don't hesitate to ask. Thank you.

**Linda Pilgrim-** I am not saying that the millage rate shouldn't and couldn't be reduced but, I have to agree with Councilman Shultz for this year we have missed our chance. We are too deep into the year we are out of time. But it is not the end it comes up again in just a few months.

**Kevin Shultz-** I am going to echo what Councilman Moore and Councilwoman Pilgrim said. I am affected by it as well. I saw it on my tax bill just as the rest of the City did. I am not pleased with it but, I do know that in order to grow the City and move forward with the things we want to do we had to have something. Rolling back to cut it almost in half is a difficult thing to do. If we ever needed to go back up again it is even more difficult to go back up again once you have reduced it and cut it in half. Like Ms. Pilgrim said I am not opposed to looking at it again when we redo it. Hopefully if the economy keeps going up like it is and property taxes are assessed it is going to roll back even more like from six to 5.75. I am not going to say that it is going to roll back all the way to three. We can certainly take a look at it and do a reduction and do it the correct way and do it in the time frame. Again, thank you all for coming out. I would like to recognize Councilman Dimsdale and Councilwoman Dimsdale, our previous Council who are in attendance tonight. Kathy and Wayne and I know you are busy with grand kids but thank you for coming out tonight.

**Carol Witcher -** Well all of us on Council live in the City and it affects us as well as it affects you. We have dreams for this City, and we can't build the City that we want to build without some sacrifice from all of us and it is never easy to put something else on your personal budget nor is it on the City. We have fought over this several times and I don't mean fist fought but we have fought in our hearts about it. We have talked about it. We have worked about it and I go back to the "render unto Ceaser what is Ceaser's". I have to pay mine; I live on a very fixed income and if there is anybody out there that says they live on a fixed income I stand with you because I do also. Every penny that I take out of my pocket to give to somebody else means that I am not going to spend that on me or my home. I appreciate you coming, and I appreciate you being here to see and hear. It is important that you do come to City Council meetings. This is your City. If you want to know what is going on you don't get it word of mouth and you don't get it second hand,

you don't get it at the grocery store, you simply get it by being here making your notes and going home and thinking. Contact us. I think we are on the City pages you can contact us at any time and speak to us. I appreciate you being here tonight, and I appreciate you doing what you have done to follow up as good citizens and I applaud Linda for speaking out and having the courage to say something that was very difficult to say.

**Mayor Lamar Lee-** Normally I do not have a comment along with the Council Members but tonight I will make an exception. At this time, I would like to announce I am retiring again! After 30 years with General Motors I retired but went right back to work. One of the things I did was get into politics. I ran for a seat on the Walton County Board of Education and served for 4 years. After that with the urging of the Walnut Grove Mayor Don Cannon I ran for City Council in Walnut Grove. I served 12 years as a councilman on Walnut Grove City Council and then threw my hat in the ring for Mayor. I have served as your Mayor for almost eight years now. After many hours of discussion and reflection with my wife Brenda. I have decided that I will retire August 30, 2019. I want to express my appreciation and sincere thanks to the citizens of Walnut Grove for affording me the opportunity to serve them and the City I truly love. I appreciate the work and support of our current Walnut Grove City Council and those council members who have served with me in the past. In closing, I want to thank you and praise our current staff for their tireless efforts to efficiently and effectively run our city. Thank you and God bless Walnut Grove.

**Carol Witcher-** I make a motion we adjourn, seconded by Linda Pilgrim, motion passed. Adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Approved by Mayor and Council this \_\_\_\_\_ day of September 2019.

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Mayor

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Katherine A. Glass, City Clerk