



City of Walnut Grove  
**COUNCIL MEETING**  
**AGENDA - Amended**  
Thursday, February 11, 2021  
7:00 P.M.  
Municipal Building -1021 Park St.

**Present at Meeting:**  
**Mayor: Mark Moore**  
**Council Members**  
**Stephanie Moncrief**  
**Linda Pilgrim**  
**Mary Hall**  
**John Dial**  
**Attorney: Tony Powell**  
**City Clerk: Keegan Ramsey**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. INVOCATION – Tony Powell**

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**IV. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Mayor Mark Moore asked to amend the agenda to add discussion of ballpark fees, light repair and grants for walking trails. Mayor Mark Moore also asked to amend for discussion of public works vehicles and to add an executive session.

Council member Linda Pilgrim made a motion. Council member Stephanie Moncrief seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**V. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Council member Mary Hall approved the consent agenda. Council member Linda Pilgrim seconded. Vote unanimous.

**I. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**1. Community Involvement Committee – Council Member Linda Pilgrim**

There is not a whole lot to report so far this year. We did have a meeting on February 5th and we talked about some things that we might want to do this coming year. We're going to start up our marketplace again in April, we talked about the second weekend in April. So hopefully we'll get things going and will start moving now that spring is coming on. Thank you and we're still looking for new members if anybody is interested.

**2. Downtown Development Committee – Council Member Stephani Moncrief**

I have lots to report I did the training that I have been hoping to do. It was a 6-hour training over actually 8-hour training over 2 days and it was online. It was through the Carl Vinson Institute of government. It was very informative. It was nice. They had the ability to have breakout sessions and fortunately in a couple of those breakout sessions. I had the privilege of talking with people from Oxford, Covington and nearby towns, who are going through a lot of the same challenges and changes and developments that we're going through along with some of their own special little things, so I learned a lot. But there is so much more to learn so I am signing up for the second round of training through the Carl Vincent. Institute, which comes up very quickly but it's within my budgetary allowance for training, so I'll be sending that through the city clerk. But in the meantime, while I'm doing that, I'm also looking for people who live inside the city and some business owners who live in the city, or business owners who are in the city who live outside the city but in Walton County. I am going to be approaching them and asking them to consider being on this downtown development authority as well as some people that I've been told by council members who are interested. I have somebody from the school who lives within the city who is very interested in being on the Development Authority, And as I was speaking with them. I'm also going to be talking with people like Don Cannon, who has gone through this very successfully in the past. And also the surrounding cities of Social Circle, Monroe, Loganville, and Oxford to ask them and talk with them about their downtown development. Authorities because they have the experience and unfortunately, none of us really have had that experience of doing a downtown development authority. And while it would be great to sit there and say, Let's go! Let's Develop! But we have to do lots of steps before we can get there and if we can expedite them as quickly as possible. That is great and I will work towards that end, but in the meantime. There is a lot to learn first and make sure we're dotting our "I" and crossing "T". Before we get to a point where we grow too big, too fast out of control and don't do what the constituents who voted us into this position wanted us to do.

**3. Parks and Recreation Committee – Council Member Mary Hall**

OK, there are some items that when we met last in January, we talked about ballpark fees and TJ Jordon knows a lot about Ballfields and the structure of them and he's worked with a Walton County for 20 years, he has been an umpire for many years and so he this is his field. And so I asked him to talk with Walton County to find out what they charge for their fields. Granted, our fields don't look the way Walton counties does, but the point is we could use our field for the practice fields, and I know when my son was younger, and my daughter was younger, it was very difficult to find practice fields and so now we have this connection with TJ that he is willing to get the word out. Spring ball is going to be starting here in March. We need to get the word out too, have people be signing up to use our field for practices. Our fee was \$10.00 for a 2 hour minimum, and Walton County's is a \$20.00 and they do it for an hour and a half. So, I would like to make a motion to bring it up to \$15.00 for a 2 hour minimum. If the motion is approved. we could start that as early as mid March. The other thing is obviously I know that they have ballfield lights. I spoke with mayor and he said that there's wiring issues, but maybe down the road. I'm not sure if

that's something that public works can work on, you guys have done such a great job up to this point. To find out what it is actually needs to be done, whether it's the Poles. I bring this because this is a source of revenue. That's just smart for our city to get as much revenue into our city as possible. And if we had lights that were on from 7 to 9. That's at least 2 practices, 5 days a week and then you have all day on Saturday. That's just a good source of revenue that I'd like to capitalize on. I think it's smart on our part.

Item C: doing a walking trail. I found truest has a grant right now. So we, the committee, would love to see that be the first big project. It is to do The Walking trail, to get people out into our community an experience the greatness that we have here and so with that, I would love to move forward and work with Keenan because he did a great job working on the LMIG grant. And so I am researching on the Georgia Municipal Association website as they have grants regularly for free money. My goal is to get that project started as soon as possible. I would like to make a motion now to increase the ballpark fees and ask if anybody has any questions.

#### **Motion made to Increase Ball Park fees**

Mayor Moore called for a motion to increase ballpark fees to \$15 from \$10.

Council member Mary Hall made the motion, Jon Dial second, motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. Public Works Committee – Council Member Jon Dial**

Still, working on getting a committee together. The mayor approached me about researching Information for new service and bucket trucks for the city. The two trucks that they have now, one is a 28 year old 1993 Ford F 350 service truck. It's got 218, 1000 miles. And it had over \$1300.00 in repairs, made over the last 2 years. It's probably past its real usefulness. But the one that's really worrying everybody on the maintenance crew is the bucket truck. They're not sure about it as far as whether it's going to crank from time to time when they get out on the job site. It is a 27 year old truck. It's a F 350 bucket truck and it's got 146,000 miles on it, and it will reach most of the poles. As far as putting up the Christmas lights and decorations and if it's parked right, it will reach the parking lot lights out here in front of the community building and I think it will probably reach the lights at the library is that correct Brian?

Public Works Manager Brian Pilgrim responded "Yes Sir".

Jon Dial continued: OK, it won't reach the ball field lights right now. So put that in food for thought. I looked at several dealerships, I talked with people at Akins Ford, Maxie Price, Loganville Ford and I talked with people at Cole Automotive who do a lot of business with cities. They have a bucket truck and a service truck, they have several service trucks, but none of the other places have a bucket truck, either used or new. In fact, Jerry White Akins Ford said that "no way you can get a new one or really even a used one is to go through the manufacturer and it's located in Alabama". On a new bucket truck that's a

little bit bigger truck than what we've got now on the manufactures website is 143000, and they also had several used ones their own line and they range from in the \$46,000.00 range to the high 60s for a used one that's 4 or 5 years old. Also, as far as the service trucks go Maxie Price had several that they had just sold, they averaged 48,459.00 and they were new but they were 20 and 21 models. Then I also saw a privately listed service truck up in use next to the Dollar General and it was a little bit bigger truck. It's a 550 model, but it had 111,000 miles on it. It also had a welder, air compressor, and a fluids pump for hydraulic oil and gas. It was listed they wanted \$39,900 for it and it's a 2014 model. So I felt like I got a good idea as to what was out there and again, with the bucket trucks, there's just not very many available. You can find some service trucks here and there, most that will be new. Cole's had 3 different models. 2007 and two 2012, a 250 and a 350 and a 550. And they range from 41,500 to \$41,300 inn price and for the mileage and price, the 2007 is not a bad deal so, I would rather I think see the city spend its money on the bucket truck and get the usefulness for that versus spending it on a newer model service truck. So, If I could make a recommendation. I would recommend the 2007 F350 service truck and the 2012 F550 bucket truck at Cole's Automotive.

Public Works Manager Brian Pilgrim:

The F350 utility truck is hard to start on cold mornings, the top speed is 40 miles an hour, I worry about just going to get gas. Hauling a trailer with the lawn mowers would be very difficult for it and kind of dangerous. And the boom truck is OK. It runs pretty well, it's the only generator on the back that gives me a fit. Just about every time I use it. And so it is hard to get anything accomplished with it. We have to have a towing company take our tractors and lawn mowers to be repaired. This is a safety issue for our employees.

Mayor and Council discussed further and found further research would be necessary.

## II. **PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**— Don Cannon, Chair

I appreciate the opportunity. The Commission last met on February 2, and I would like to report on four particular items that occur there. First of all, sort of on the sad side, we had a call from Eloise Carter, who had indicated that cause of family health concerns that she found it necessarily to leave her position on the commission and resign. So, we expressed our regrets to her and certainly understand her decision, particularly during these times. The next item is that we were reviewing a variance request filed by the owner's of 1651 highway 138. They filed the request for the purpose of permitting a business use that's not authorized in C1 zoning, which is what their property is currently zoned. City Attorney Powell had indicated that this was not a legitimate use for a variance request and so they have withdrawn their variance application that they have filed. A rezoning request was filed for rezoning of that property to C2. So, we'll be hearing more about that in March. The next item is that the Commission has

determined that there may need to be some changes in the table of permitted uses that's a part of our ordinance and we are in the process of conducting a review of that table and expect compiling a list of revisions that the proposed revisions that we think might need to be made, and we will be presenting to the mayor and Council our findings on that fairly soon. We also contacted the Carl Vinson Institute of Management. They reported that it will be conducting a training program for planning and zoning members entitled "Planning and Zoning 101, The Basics", taking place in April. The commission looks forward to attending. That concludes my report.

Further discussion on the requirements of a Zoning Administrator.

III. **PUBLIC FORUM – No Comments from the public**

IV. **OLD BUSINESS**

None

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Appointments

a. City Clerk – Keegan Ramsey

Council member Linda Pilgrim made a motion to appoint Keegan Ramsey as City Clerk, Jon Dial seconded, the council voted unanimously to appoint Keegan Ramsey as City Clerk. Attorney Tony Powell administered the oath.

2. Mayor reported that the LMIG Grant- \$17,074.06, to be used on the Magnolia Springs paving.

VI. **REPORTS**

1. **Clerk's Report**

State Patrol issued 22 citations.

Walton County issued 1 citation.

There were no Pavilion and Ball Park Rentals

28 building permits

2 violations for vehicles parked on the grass.

Also, Keegan Ramsey reported: "I'm excited for the new position of I want to thank everybody at the all the council members from for voting me in and I want to do my best to make the city, the best it can be. Thank you."

2. **Mayor's Report**

I've been working with Mr. Ramsey now for a little over a month and has done a fantastic job. I think it's well deserved. I look forward to Keegan being our City Clerk. I think we did find a great clerk with Mr Ramsey. Also, I want to report that homes, if you've noticed, on 138, are going up on the Enclave at Dial Farm. They're flying up and they doing wonderful job. I met with the inspector from precision Planning. He says he's hasn't seen such well designed and well built homes and in his inspections, everything is going very well. Even though the signs show that starting at \$200,000 for these homes, it looks like, after talking to the developer, they're going to be anywhere between \$280,000 and \$320,000 due to the fact that that's what people are requestion and he can't build them fast

enough. This is exciting news because I remind you once those homes are built, we're getting sewer flow into our sewer plant and we will get revenue from that to offset the costs that we're paying for the operations. And so that is it is just great for our city. Also, I think I mentioned at the last council meeting, but I'm going to remind everybody we did purchase property down on 1121 Park St to move our public works from the inside the City Park. We are in the process of getting quotes for the fencing and the roofing. I'm a little behind on that, forgive me, but we'll get going now that we've got Keegan on board. With that public works being moved out of the park, that allows us then to allow our Parks and Recreation to design the walking path that I have had numerous citizens request. This is moving forward with the city of Walnut Grove, The I'm happy to report that the tennis courts are used daily. So, with the investment of the resurfacing of our Tennis and Basket Ball Courts has been a great investment for the city. I look forward to replacing these aging vehicles and we will do our due diligence to make sure that the city is protected.

VII. **TOWN HALL DISCUSSION**

Discussion on the Bucket Truck height ability and the possibility of renting out the concession stand.

VIII. **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Jon Dial**

I have gotten on the schedule or the beginning courses with the GMA so you know, we're making progress on that getting that

**Mary Hall**

Well congratulations Keegan Ramsey. Thank you for all the hard work you've done so far. Thank you all for being here tonight and everything else.

**Linda Pilgrim**

Congratulations Keegan! I'm happy to be with you with this team working with you, we're going to keep you busy. Thank you. You probably already know that I see you every day, but welcome to the group. We're happy to have you and thank you all for coming out?

**Stephanie Moncrief**

Looking over the meeting tonight and being a part of this it's encouraging. I've put in one quarter of my service a full year in a couple of months and I'm one quarter of the way through my term. I said from the beginning this was going to take a year to get this cleaned up and moving and it's nice to see that things are moving in the right direction. A lot of things are moving in the right direction. There's some things that as a council I think we need to work on a little bit, communication and transparency. It's not about waiting for people to come and ask us questions it's us getting the word out. I spoke with the mayor earlier this week about doing some kind of a newsletter to get out and in front of people so they're not wondering what is going on do I have to make a phone call to find out because nobody ever wants to come to the meeting. I think it's on us to make sure to get a newsletter out and tell them about the Planning and Zoning Committee and what they're doing, and about having Tony Powell on board. About how Mary is working so hard and John and Linda. So that there's no question about what is going on, transparency is great

right? But not if people have to come to you and ask you about it. So I think it's a really great thing that we need to consider doing, even in the best of times communication is tough and as a council we're challenged during this time, not only just communicating with our constituency, but also with each other. Making sure we all know what's going on and the fact that you're here tonight reporting on a committee is outstanding! I appreciate that more than you know and I'm sure the council does. And it would be great if our code enforcement officer could come and report or if we had work sessions where people could come report so we could learn about those things. Just things that we can look at for the future to improve and keep going. It's exciting if I'm going to use your word. It's exciting to see all the things happening and going on and the training that's happening and finally people kind of getting their feet under them and being able to move forward with some of the things that we've talked about for so long so thanks for coming guys.

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Land Settlement**

1. Entered into Executive session Council member Linda Pilgrim made motion. Council member Mary Hall seconded. Council member Jon Dial abstained.

2. Returned from Executive Session. Council member Mary Hall made motion. Council member Linda Pilgrim seconded. Unanimous vote to return from Executive session.

**I. ADJOIN**

Council member Stephanie Moncrief motioned to adjourn. Council member Mary Hall seconded.