

Woodbury City Council Meeting

Monday, May 18th, 2020

Attending:

Mayor Steve Ledbetter, PhD
Councilmember Ronnie Garrett (Mayor Pro Tempore)
Councilmember L C Gates
Councilmember Randy Carter
Councilmember Carolyn Ledbetter
Police Chief Smart Web
City Clerk Angel Fowler
Public Works Director Willie "Buck" Holmes
City Attorney Danielle Sewell
WDA Chairperson Kera Summers
P&Z Secretary Vicky Matthews
Historic Society Chairperson Candy Head

<<Length: 1:36:47>>

Hello, everybody. Thank you for joining us, we have all our council members on the call or here at City Hall and at this time I'd like to call the May 18 Woodbury City Council meeting to order and go ahead and pray. Oh God, thank you for this opportunity to do the city's business. We pray that you would lead, guide, and direct us as we work to move our city forward, we will do it in accordance to Your will, and we pray all of this in Jesus name. Amen.

So, at this time, I would entertain a motion to adopt the agenda for this evening.

Ronnie Garrett: I move to adopt the agenda.

Steve Ledbetter: Do I have a second?

Carolyn Ledbetter: Second.

Steve Ledbetter: So, all in favor say, Yay.

All Council Members:

Yay.

Steve Ledbetter: At this time, I will entertain a motion to adopt the minutes for the February 17. The March 18, the March 19, the March 24, the April 10, and April 28 minutes as presented.

Randy Carter: I make that motion.

Steve Ledbetter: Randy made the motion. Do we have a second?

Ronnie Garrett: I second.

Steve Ledbetter: Ronnie made the second. All in favor say "yay".

Council Members:

Yay.

Steve Ledbetter: All right. Motion carries. Thank you. As a part of the mayor's update this evening I have asked Leigh Hopkins, our program manager for Georgia Tech and EDRP to provide a program overview.

Leigh Hopkins:

Okay.

Thank you all for having me join you this evening. I appreciate it. This is my first virtual city council meeting.

I appreciate it. Thank you so much. And thank you all for having me this evening. It's a pleasure to be with you, and we are so excited to be working with the city on this project. We have recently started a project with a city to conduct a strategic priorities assessment. We call it a strategic assessment because it's like a strategic plan but just a little bit tighter. It has all the elements of the strategic plan, but we're going to just get to it quickly.

I am with the Center for Economic Development Research Program at Georgia Tech, and we are part of the enterprise Innovation Institute. The Enterprise Innovation Institute is an extension of the university. We provide several services throughout the state and throughout the southeast. We help communities with strategic planning, fiscal and economic impact modeling, economic development, Professional Education, labor and market analysis, workforce development, anything that is related to economic development in communities we are prepared to help. As part of what we do a lot of strategic planning work is conducted for communities across the state. We are also excited to have

the EDA University Center designation. So, we are an Economic Development Administration, University Center. There's only a couple of schools in the state that have that designation, but it allows us to do some really fun things. One of those things that we're doing with that University Center designation, and I'll explain that a little bit more, but we're doing a strategic plan. And the city as far as I understand, it has not had a strategic plan done before in the past. So, as part of a strategic plan, it has a few different elements. So, we're going to be doing a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis is an analysis of the community in terms of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We're also going to be looking at the current state of downtown meaning the buildings, the state of those buildings, the historic nature of them, and possible redevelopment opportunities for downtown. And then what are some of the conditions that are causing the need for redevelopment. We would also like to work with your community to help create a vision or draft a vision of where you would like to go and what you would like to see for your city in the future. And then we're going to provide an implementation action plan for the city to use during the designation period. What I didn't mention was, we're doing this because the city is applying for its Rural Zone Designation. The Rural Zone Designation through the Department of Community Affairs is a five-year designation and as part of the rural zone application, Department of Community Affairs require a strategic plan. DCA is looking for the city to explore what implementation actions could be taken during that five-year period. Then, what are the types of businesses that you could see downtown that we believe would do really well. So, all of this is to help the city obtain that rural zone designation.

So, I'm not the rural zone expert, I'm not with Ga DCA. But I know enough to be dangerous when talking with folks about it. So, there are 10 zones that are designated per year across the state and those applications are due in August. The zones are comprised of properties that the community feels would be ripe for redevelopment or investment. It's a five-year designation and there's three different types of tax credits that somebody could receive for investing in the community. As I understand it, the tax credits are for job creation, building acquisition, and building rehabilitation. The eligibility to apply to be a rural zone designated community is based on population. Rural, obviously, rural communities, smaller communities, under 15,000, are eligible to apply. Also, DCA is looking for communities that have a concentration of historic buildings in the downtown or rural zone. DCA is also looking for communities that have some element of economic distress. This can be defined a number of different ways, typically, the way we define it and the way DCA defines it, is based on income and unemployment relative to either the state or the US numbers. So, some level of distress or decline in the proposed area. The strategic plan is one requirement of the application to become a rural zone. So, this presents a little bit of a chicken and egg situation for a lot of communities who are applying for the rural zone designation. They are smaller and more rural, but they may not have the funds to get that strategic plan done or get those requirements done for the application. So that's where we come in...where the Economic Development Research Program and the University Center program comes in. Georgia Tech helps solve this chicken and egg situation.

The economic development research program helps communities leverage its investment after an application is submitted and selected, with a minimal amount of city funds. We help offset the cost of

our typical research costs with the EDRP funding. Some of the project types that qualify for our EDRP program, we do a lot of strategic planning and visioning.

That's my background, my bread and butter. Downtown development planning we have a member of our staff who has a historic preservation background and Development Authority background as well. We're very happy with doing downtown development planning, we do economic forecasting and feasibility studies. Really the strategic planning and visioning is an area that we focused on, especially with this DCA rural zone program. We feel it's a very good use of our funding and the EDRP program. It helps really serve the communities that we're trying to reach.

One of my recent projects that we completed was in the City of Rossville. It's on the Tennessee and Georgia border just south of Chattanooga. We did a project very similar to the project we're working here in Woodbury. They were also applying for the rural zone designation from DCA and they did receive it with the program that we created.

What we did for them: they had a number of different studies done in the past and we didn't want to recreate the wheel. So, we synthesized a lot of those studies that they had done, and we also looked at the current state of the community and gave them a work program for the next five years. And then to carry that forward to further their economic development goals. They have a really cool old mill there that is ripe for redevelopment and really interesting downtown with a lot of history much like your community. So primary criteria for selection for our EDRP projects we look for different criteria when selecting projects to participate in this program. Is it innovative in its economic development, thinking? Are the actions that come from the project going to be successful? Can we show impact? Can we show metrics at the end of this project? EDRP really wants to see metrics with regards to its funding. So, after a project, we generally follow up with the community and ask them if they have seen jobs and investment in the community and within the rural zone. The goal is just that...jobs and investment. It's our hope that investment in the EDRP program will lead to those metrics.

We also want to know that the applicant is going to be a committed participant. We asked for some level of commitment from the community and, and that helps us know that they're going to be committed to the program, and Woodbury is no exception. We take applications for the EDRP program from all eight southeast states. So far, we've really only reached communities in Alabama and Georgia, but communities from the southeast are eligible to apply.

Next steps for the city for this project: We are opening the community survey today...right now. So, if you want to scan that code in your phone, you can go right to the survey. Or, you can also go to the survey from the link provided. The survey will stay open for two weeks. We will also have a community forum on Tuesday at 6pm. We certainly hope that you're able to attend and participate in the community forum.

Finally, at the end of our work we will provide our assessment and then the City will be ready to submit the application in August. We're not submitting the application the Mayor will submit it. It's not a guarantee that completing the strategic assessment will get the designation, but we're very encouraged and think that the leadership in the city is strong, and you guys have made some incredible strides up to this point. It's our hope that we all have a positive outcome at the end.

I'll take a couple of questions, maybe for some clarity.

Steve Ledbetter: So why did you guys choose Woodbury as a recipient for an EDRP Grant?

Leigh Hopkins: So, first of all, we feel that Woodbury has a good shot at getting the rural zone designation. We always talk with leadership before we accept the application and we want to make sure it's the right fit. So, we felt that leadership was proactive in the community and that you were laying the foundation for your rural zone. If we feel that the actions that the city is taking to get this designation are going to lead to some positive things for the community, we will strongly consider that community for our EDRP program.

Steve Ledbetter: Thank you, oh, also share with us, the number of the interviews that you've already completed and how many do you have left.

Leigh Hopkins: We've completed all of the internal stakeholder interviews and I was sharing with the Mayor today that this is like a record for us to complete all these interviews, not only get the word out but get them scheduled, and have them completed within two weeks of starting the project. So, we've completed 33, internal stakeholder interviews, and we do internal and external stakeholder interviews. And then we're also doing the community survey. So, there's three different layers to this. The internal stakeholder interviews are those folks who live in the community or live nearby or do business in the community on a day to day basis. External interviews are those stakeholders who may not know the community so well, or may work with the community just occasionally, and we just get different perspectives.

We want to get a holistic picture of what's going on in the community with those internal and external stakeholder interviews, and then with the community survey, just interviewing the residents and folks who, you know, live there and may not be as familiar with the economic development. So, just getting the perspectives from residents is important. This is sort of a new thing for us. Typically, we're focused on the economic development piece only. But this will be really our first kind of widespread community survey that we're doing as part of an economic development strategy. So, it'll be interesting. We've interviewed 33, internal stakeholders and eight external stakeholders and our external stakeholder list is not as big as our internal stakeholder list. I think I've got about half of the external stakeholder interviews completed and we've got a few more to get scheduled.

Steve Ledbetter: Any other questions for Leigh?

Steve Ledbetter: Thank you. All right. Next up on my part is the high-speed internet installations, the team will be back starting Monday to get the system up and running. For those who are on the zoom call, or even for those who are on Facebook Live, just off camera we have sitting four of the antennas and the other 52 or 53 antennas are just over to the left of the table. All these pieces of equipment have already been programmed. So, the installation team will be coming your way very soon.

Regarding community building improvements: I just wanted to plant a seed with the council this evening for the community building. Over the next year, we're going to have to have conversations about upgrading our community building. It's in need of some work just because of its age along with the wear and tear on the building. Good news, the building is being used. So, for that, I am very thankful. My thoughts on how to fund the renovations are to use the monies that are coming in for the rental. I think we could just convert those funds back into doing updates for that building so that it takes care of itself. To me, that sounds like the best way to do it, and it affords us the opportunity to start putting money into it right away. We get about \$7,000 a year for the rental of that building. So, we can invest that money back into the building, we can maintain a very good up-to-date community building so that we can do what's right for our community, but I just wanted to plant that seed tonight. We'll come back and have that discussion in June.

There is no executive session this evening.

The plan first update: the application was submitted. I did have a conversation with the team for PlanFirst. They were very encouraged from our application. They were impressed that we had been moving so hard and diligently through our comprehensive plan and our five-year short-term work plan. I asked them if there was any additional information that they needed, and we were told no, there was no additional information needed at this time that they were going into deliberations for determining the delegate designation as a PlanFirst community. I'm encouraged from the conversation, actually excited.

I want to give a huge shout out to Kera Summers, Angel Fowler, Chief Smart Web, to Kay Williamson, Vicki Matthews, and Candy Head. This team has done an amazing job getting us into a position where we're going to be able to make application for the Rural Zone Designation. Just to piggyback off of what Leigh said earlier, the tax credits that are associated with the designation will help us redevelop our downtown and bring it back to where it was many years ago. I'm excited about the opportunity.

At this time, I would ask for our department reports.

Ronnie Garrett: I have a couple of questions about the high-speed internet.

Steve Ledbetter: Sure.

Ronnie Garrett: These antennas that you've got here, those people already subscribed?

Steve Ledbetter: They have.

Ronnie Garrett: What would be a typical fee for service technician coming or whatever. You know, I'm saying the city will pick the not the way that the service agreement is written.

Steve Ledbetter: The city is selling the antenna to the individual who in turn is responsible for making sure their end is maintained, not from a software perspective, but from a hardware perspective. From a software perspective, the antenna will be managed from City Hall, so it will be technically managed from anywhere in the world. We've got the system set up so that we can turn the system off should we have to disconnect service. But the average that we're hearing right now from LVS [Low Voltage Systems] who is the contractor that we're using for installation. They're asking for \$150 for the installation fee. And what that does is put the antenna on the side of the house, runs the cable inside and makes sure that it's operational. We have had service with the doctor's office and with the Malone's here on Main Street since August of last year, I can tell you that I have received one phone call from the doctor's office because there service was down and it was a day after a thunderstorm. Outside of that the system has been up and working. Thank the Lord! Without fielding problems at all, without any service interruption from customers. The doctor's office and the Malone's seemed to be very happy with the service. And the cost of the hardware is right now it's \$109. Is that what it was Angel?

Angel Fowler: It is, I think we're charging \$110 to cover shipping costs.

Steve Ledbetter: And, that provides customers with the access straight back to City Hall. It's a proprietary system. So, somebody just can't go out and buy something and connect to it. It would not work. It's a Georgia based company, they're out of Canton, Georgia. One of the things that we wanted to do with this system is use Georgia based companies when possible and keep our purchases at home as much as possible – in Georgia. Use local vendors whenever possible, the only vendor that we have not used a local service for was for the firewall. And the firewall that we chose is a very high-end firewall that will afford us the opportunity to manage the system as an internet service provider. So as an ISP, we want to make sure that we don't let things through the system that will damage our system, or damage anybody else's equipment, but we also want to make sure that we're staying safe and it's constantly managed, it's managed on a 24-hour basis and it's updated routinely. I am thoroughly impressed with the firewall system.

Steve Ledbetter: Okay, Department Reports. Police Department. Chief, you're up.

Chief Smart Web: During the month of March 2020, the Woodbury Police Department worked diligently to resolve the calls for service for our citizens. According to our 911 CAD dispatch report we answered approximately 229 calls for service. Of those calls for service our officers responded to, 4 larceny, 1 aggravated assault 1 battery, 3 vandalism, 1 forgery, 1 Cruelty to Children, and 2 disorderly conduct. The department also issued department 47 citations and 25 warnings. Our department has also begun the implementation of community service details for any offenders who have been required to participate as part of their sentencing. During COVID we have not had but probably two or three offenders. We started out looking at the dirty streets. But like I said before, once this COVID is over, and this lifted all stays and stuff and we can get more community service from probation and no one else so we'll be more than glad to have them out.

During the month of April, we had 99 calls for service. We had 2 Larceny 1 burglary, one vehicle theft 1 battery 1 vandalism, 1 DUI and 1 disorderly conduct. We also issued 68 citations and 26 warning. We are also having a lot of complaints since the weather is warming about dirt bikes and ATV's. We've had dirt bikes, basically see the police then run from the police, we're not going to chase them. We're going to just try to find out who owns them. And if we see dirt bikes and four wheelers, because there is nowhere in the city that you're allowed to ride them on the city streets and the only place you could probably ride is on private property that someone gave you permission. We will be even if you're not riding, we're going to stop and photograph them. That way we will know if we see someone riding one and then the owner says, Well, you know, it wasn't me on there if they got away. We also have one that my officer had gave him a warning, we have impounded, and we are going to hold it until court. That's the only way to send a message before somebody gets hurt. Not only is the biker going to get hurt, but he or she is gonna possibly run out in front of someone or hit someone causing an accident to someone that is just coming through our city. But those type things that you know we do not want, but like I said, we must send a message with that. It seemed like since we confiscated about one bike, and people see that we are really doing what we say we are going to do, we haven't seen as much. We are going to be proactive about what we do. And we'll just continue to do what we need to do.

Steve Ledbetter: I know you and I had conversations about how we compare from both our Part I and Part II offenses and our traffic enforcement along with how we compare with similar sized cities. So, I would just ask that before our next Council meeting, if you don't mind if you would share that information with all of us so that as a community we understand how we compare with Part I and Part II crimes and how we compare to other cities regarding traffic citations.

Chief Smart Web: Okay, that will be great. We'll be glad to inform our community. I want to do the same thing as well. That way we can be open about how I think our guys are performing. I think our officers are doing a great job.

Steve Ledbetter: Thank you. Okay, up next Public Works.

Willie "Buck" Holmes: Thank you, sir. Good evening. Okay for last month service calls we had repaired eight leaks; we had a main water line bust on Jonquil. The leaks were repaired by Crawford Grading and Pipe. We had 8 locates, cut grass at the water plant, and cleaned the community building. I have had several conference calls with MatchPoint about leak detection and GIS mapping. We cleared brush off the fence at the wastewater plant, scraped the road at the wastewater plant, cut the grass at the city park, community building, memory lane water tower, and jetted a clean-out on Garry Kendrick. We put up a mailbox at the wastewater plant for the Leachate trucks so they can provide a distribution receipt. We had some food left over from one of the food drives in March, so last week we come up with a plan to donate that to the Warm Springs Church. We trimmed the grass along the flowerbeds last week and Crawford Grading put in a new drainpipe and repaired the driveway at the wastewater plant.

I would like to give y'all a little update on some of the projects that we've accomplished since we last met. We got carbon mixer installed at the water treatment plant. We got a new Scada System on our Folk Ave water tank. Georgia DDT raised the storm drain grates on Main Street, one of the pumps at the wastewater plant was rebuilt, and we're in the process of getting the second motor rebuilt. MatchPoint the company doing the leak detection and GIS mapping started today. They will be working with us for at least a week.

Update on cleaning the perimeter of the hay field: I am still taking bids. I got one last week and a guy met me today that wants to put in bid.

Steve Ledbetter: Buck, what are your replacement updates on the water vault?

Willie "Buck" Holmes: Basically, they're still waiting on the guy to call and give a definite date for starting the repair. He's in the middle of a big project. And so, he really can't give me a scheduled date that he can start but I talked to him today and I will hear more by Wednesday. And on water meter replacements. I met with David Ellis today to discuss MEC which is the company they contracted with to install the new meters.

Ronnie Garrett

Yeah, we need a backflow preventer on each of the meters. Does the installation include backflow preventers?

Mayor Steve Ledbetter: Yes. The company will install backflow preventers at every meter as the new meters are installed. Also, we're trying our best to educate our community as much as we can, and we sure could use some help. So, folks, if you've got questions or concerns about how we're doing this, please call us and ask. We'll be more than happy to sit down and share with you why this is a requirement, and backflow preventers are a requirement by EPA, and why it's important for you to have an expansion tank put on your hot water heater as a result of the backflow preventor. We will be more than happy to have a conversation about backflow preventers and expansion tanks.

Mayor Steve Ledbetter

There is nothing that will prevent you from going ahead and putting the expansion tank on your hot water heater now, even though you may be in phase three of the water meter replacement program. But just as a follow up, Angel could help with the answer for this. Could you share with us what the city received for the month of April for our Leachate distribution through our wastewater ponds?

Angel Fowler, City Clerk

The April invoice was \$2,700, and as of right now for the month of May \$5300. They dump everyday so it changes daily.

Mayor Ledbetter

Just as an update from our water and sewer system, meter readings completed Friday and rereads have not been done. So, the water report will not be available until tomorrow. Angel, can you share with us the process that you and your team used for installation of the new meters?

Angel Fowler

We have installation guidelines and process we will be using. Also, next month when the guys read meters, not only will we have the 200 meters that will be radio read, Buck and his guys will read the rest of the meters using an iPad to enter the readings. They have to enter the numbers in and not have to physically write them. Then, everything will be uploaded in June directly into our financial system, Clerkbooks. We already have everything set up ready for the data entry into our software. The staff are really excited about how the new system will help us be more efficient and productive.

Ronnie Garrett

I got one question: What's the average pressure around town?

Mayor Ledbetter

I actually asked that question and was told the average pressure was 50 psi. The contractor told me that unless it's above 70 psi, the expansion tanks are not as crucial — they are highly recommended.

Angel Fowler

Okay, so we heard from the tax specialist, the company that we worked with to recoup some sales tax from our projects already completed. On the last project we received more than \$30,000. They were looking at this project and they're reporting the city could receive \$43,000. We should know

more about when these monies will come into the city, but I would think based on the last project that we will receive it in 2021.

The city is in the process of changing our court software system from Courtware to CJT. The main reason that we decided to change was price. Courtware was charging us \$14 per citation and CJ T will charge us \$5 per citation. Courtware also informed us that they will be increasing the monthly cost of their software from our current charge of \$600 to 1400 dollars per month in addition to the \$14 a citation charge. The new software price by CJT will cover installation, training, updates, and will be compatible with the new computers going in the patrol cars.

Included in your packet is a copy of the recommended Customer policy for your review. There is also a small fee schedule. We have been working on this policy for several months. This will include information on applications, deposits, customer service, customer damage, and owners' responsibilities. A fee schedule needs to be added to this policy, the fee schedule the city has is outdated by more than 20 years and out of line compared to the other cities, We did get about five different fee schedules from the surrounding communities to ensure that we were competitive.

As an example, on fees, the City does not have a fee for the installation of different size meters, commercial taps or meters, or placement fees. If a customer damages a piece of equipment, they are not held accountable for the cost to replace the equipment. Additionally, the last time these fees were updated was in 1999. The second set of fees that we need to discuss is building permit fees and impact fees. The city does not have any kind of impact fee, and the last time we've updated permit fees was 2000. The third item is zoning applications, requests for rezoning, sign permits, etc. The staff will have a recommended schedule to council as soon as possible for approval.

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay, so you're not making a recommendation. Correct? You're asking us to consider your comments and you'll be making a request at a later council meeting.

Ronnie Garrett

We got a whole lot of information on Friday; I think this policy would require us to make a lot of changes to our ordinance book. We need to make these changes through ordinance.

A Fowler

Either way we needed to have a policy. We do have a policy or ordinance on sewer cutback, if you had a leak or filling a swimming pool.

Ronnie Garrett

Okay. But we already have a utilities code of Ordinances. And I think it would be better if we convert this customer service manual to an ordinance.

City Attorney

I mean, that's definitely something we could look at. Once I get my hands on everything, I can look through and see what we can do about it if that's what y'all wish to happen.

Ronnie Garrett

Well, some of it is going to be ordinance related thing and some of it is going to be policy.

Mayor Ledbetter

This is a procedure the clerks will use to do their daily business in the front office. And, yes, I do agree some portions of our ordinances may need to be updated.

Ronnie Garrett

So, it's gonna probably be some overlap with the ordinance within the procedures and policies that is like the ordinance is titled. Because there are a lot of conflict.

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay, we'll definitely get Danielle to help us take a look and make sure that we don't have any conflicts. Yeah, we can make sure everything aligns.

Mayor Ledbetter

Angel, just a last question for you. Income versus expenditures. It looks like we're doing quite well. Looks like we're about 4% under budget today.

Ronnie Garrett

Monthly fund balance transfer, where are they being transferred from?

Mayor Ledbetter

The fund balance transfer from water to General for payroll, okay.

Ronnie Garrett

So it's a normal transfer.

Angel Fowler

We don't wait till the end of the year to do transfers. We do it on a regular basis so that we get a clear picture of what our expenditures are. The garbage and payroll are transfers that refunded back to general fund and is reimbursed back monthly or quarterly. We regularly have discussions about how clean our budget numbers are.

Mayor Ledbetter

Special Committee Reports.

Development Authority, do you have anything?

Kera Summers

First, I'd just like to say on behalf of the Development Authority, I'd like to thank the council for voting to approve expenditure to work with the economic development research program and Georgia Tech. We are excited for this opportunity and we really appreciate the council's approval for that. I really do not have anything to add at this point. Other than we're very grateful to have this opportunity and looking forward to the results.

One other thing, due to the Coronavirus we have not been able to meet. So, we have rescheduled our meeting for this Thursday, May 21 at six o'clock.

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay, and it will be here in City Hall. So those who are interested, please come join us. We will practice social distancing. We will not fill our facility, but you're more than welcome to come and join us for our Development Authority meeting this Thursday at 6pm.

All right, thank you. Miss Vicky Matthews, do you have an update from Planning & Zoning?

Vicky Matthews

Since we have had the COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place, we have not had any meetings. We do have plans for our next meeting scheduled for this week, Wednesday, the 20th at 6pm. And we'll be meeting at city hall practicing social distancing.

Mayor Ledbetter

Perfect. All right. So, we look forward to seeing you Wednesday evening at 6pm.

I do not believe that Bob Oxford is on for a business forum.

Miss Candy, would you care to give us an update from the historical society?

Candy Head

Well, I guess if there's anything to update it would be that we're working on the community narrative part of the rural zone application. That's sort of what's going on with us right now.

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay, awesome. Well, thank you very much.

Next up on the agenda is the installation of the water meters. I think we've already had that discussion with Buck so we will move on.

At this time, I would like for us to consider raises for our employees for this year. Back in November of last year, during our budget preparation, the city ensured that we had set aside a percentage of monies that were included for employee raises. To give you an idea of where our employees sit on the comparative pay scale. Our police department is approximately \$2 per hour on their starting pay less than those in other agencies located in our county. The request that I have for the council this evening is for us to consider bringing our police officers starting pay up to a level equal with the rest of the agencies in the county and I'll be more than happy to hear your thoughts on that. Just to be clear, there was money set aside in the November budget discussion and was approved in the 2020 budget. Additionally, during the last month, the department heads have completed their performance appraisals on all of their employees. And we do have a performance appraisal for each of our employees. My recommendation is that we consider the increase for the pay and then we move our employees into a position where they are compensated comparable to the rest of the cities in our county. One of the things that I've done over the last month is I've reached out to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, I've looked through the average salaries data for cities of comparable size, and I have that data available as well if you'd like to see it. With the increase I'm proposing, we would remain within the mid-range for pay, we wouldn't be in the top half percentile of the cities, but we would be in the mid-range of cities of our size. At this time, I'd entertain any discussion from the Council on raises for all employees. My recommendation would be that we make the raises effective June 1. That would afford us the opportunity to finish all the paperwork requirements to get the pay raises in place.

Carolyn Ledbetter

I Make a motion to give the raises to our employees.

Mayor Ledbetter

I have a motion to move forward with pay increases for our employees. Do I have a second?

Ronnie Garrett
Second

Mayor Ledbetter
All in favor say Yay.

All Council Members
Yay.

Mayor Ledbetter
Next on the agenda. We've already starting budget preparation for next year, we actually started in January because I'm looking at a 12-month rolling budget instead of just for the current year.

Ronnie Garrett
I want to reduce our budget by 1 mill.

Mayor Ledbetter
So, we'll take that into consideration, and we'll figure out how we can make the budget work by reducing our millage rate.

Now, I want to give kudos to the staff. They are doing an outstanding job of making sure that we keep up with what monies we are spending and they're looking at different ways of controlling the funds. Additionally, they're going out and finding grants so that we can update our police force without any monies coming out of our city's pocket. Just an outstanding way of doing business, Buck's team is looking at contracting more work out. Kudos to the development authority as well for getting out here and working hard on business development and, bringing people into our area to spend money so that our sales tax goes up. I think our whole community is doing just an amazing job.

Next up is the historic preservation ordinance. This is going to be our first reading. This should have been done back in March. Danielle, do you mind? I think you've already looked at this back in February and I'd ask that you just share with us your thoughts about the historic preservation ordinance.

City Attorney
I was just looking through and everything. I cannot find where y'all ever provided a copy.

Mayor Ledbetter

This is the model policy from Georgia cities.

So, if you feel comfortable with the ordinance as it was presented, I'll make sure that we get connected back up with this. It's been almost four months now since we've had this conversation.

City Attorney

Yeah. I went through everything and I just could not find it. We will touch base.

Mayor Ledbetter

Thank you. Oh, this is our first reading. Any thoughts, questions, comments from council?

Ronnie Garrett

I have a question.

I have gone through this quickly, and I found some things that concern me.

You know this is different from the development authority or downtown, they have a legal ability to make decisions and sale to make a profit. So, basically, we are giving the Commission, the ability. I don't think we need to go down that route. The commission can't make any decisions, it requires legislative action. I see a conflict to decide without first getting approval. So, I still don't like the fact that some of the activities are spelled out in the ordinance

Mayor Ledbetter

Danielle, we'll make sure we get you to weigh in, but what's considered as the first reading and we'll take input between now and June.

Okay, thank you guys. Next up on the agenda is the Municode cost of adding the zoning ordinance. And this was presented back to in December.

I make a recommendation to council to move us forward on adding the Zoning Ordinance into our ordinance book. It's also for our Annual Registration to continue their support, and Municode will add an additional 532 pages worth of material based on all the other ordinances that were codify. It's about 10 years' worth of codified ordinances that need to be updated and inserted into our books. The cost is \$11,003, this money was placed into the budget for this year as part of our ongoing contract, and I just wanted to get this in front of the Council for your approval for us to move forward. It was budgeted, and we are ready to move forward.

Ronnie Garrett

Do we need color photographs, I see they are charging for printing of several pages in color?

Mayor Ledbetter

\$10 per color page, total \$790 it's probably the maps so yeah, looking at the maps that we've got to use to make decisions, it's probably going to be a requirement.

Ronnie Garrett

Okay, I didn't know what images are for? Is it an appropriate thing to do?

Yeah, I do think that those are the appropriate things to do so that we have got a real clear indication of how the current zoning map is set up. I just I don't think that there would be a better way to do it. I don't think we could do it in a grayscale to distinguish between zones.

Ronnie Garrett

I still have a problem with this zoning. Danielle, if you're listening.

City Attorney

We'll get to that part. I've gone through everything I can address those issues whenever y'all want me too.

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay, any questions or recommendations for moving us forward with the recommendation?

At this time, I'd entertain a motion to move forward with the Municode contract.

Councilmember Carolyn Ledbetter

Made the motion

Mayor Ledbetter

Do I have a second?

Councilmember Garrett

Second

Mayor Ledbetter

I have a motion and a second.

All in favor say Yay.

All Councilmembers

Yay

Mayor Ledbetter

All opposed say no. Okay, motion carries.

Mayor Ledbetter

Terms of Service to provide Internet to customers. I'd entertain any discussion that you guys have for the terms of service. Danielle, you have reviewed this. And we've been through this quite a number of times. It is lengthy, but it does cover us. It also marries and mirrors the terms of service that we have currently with Spectrum. So, there's nothing that will get us outside of issues with them with respect to Terms of Service, but I'd entertain a motion at this time that we adopt this so that we can move it forward for Terms of Service.

Ronnie Garrett

Made the motion

Mayor Ledbetter

I have a motion; do I have a second.

L C Gates

Second.

Mayor Ledbetter

I have a motion and a second, all in favor say Yay.

All Councilmembers

Yay

Mayor Ledbetter

This time we are at the legal update section of the agenda. So, Danielle, you're up, I don't think you were sent a book.

City Attorney

The first thing is, I have on my list was with the appointment of the chief. Then, the appointment of the prosecutor.

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay, do we start with the prosecution?

City Attorney

I guess was our last one February when I was asked to review. It was a question whether or not the Mayor can appoint a prosecutor for the City of Woodbury. I was asked to look at OCGA §15-18-91, that talks about prosecuting attorney and a municipal court. That code section doesn't really apply in this situation. what governs whether or not a prosecutor can be appointed is the charter in Woodbury and I would ask you to look at section 34 election of subordinate officers, which governs this and allows the Mayor to appoint a prosecutor. And what I looked at and I've sent over and I don't know if this was contained in your books or not, but I've looked at city attorney and most of the time the city attorney is also the prosecutor. It is all within one and the Woodbury charter provides for that. I do think that the city attorney section as well as the prosecution section are outdated and could definitely be cleaned up. So, it's well within the scope of the Mayor's powers to appoint a prosecutor. I would recommend looking to the City of Newnan's charter and ordinance as an example for how ours charter could be updated.

Mayor Ledbetter

So, it's within my authority to appoint a prosecutor but your recommendation is that we clean up the ordinance and further refine what you've got listed as section 3.3 and section 2-117. One being the city attorney's description and the second being the duty to prosecute and defend all suits or actions.

City Attorney

Yes, that that is my recommendation is that these two need to be cleaned up. And go more into the scope of position.

Okay, I would ask the council with respect to cleaning up the city ordinance from the recommendation from the city attorney.

Ronnie Garrett

I make Motion

Mayor Ledbetter

Do I have a second?

Carolyn Ledbetter

Seconded

Mayor Ledbetter

I have a motion in a second. All in favor say Yay.

All Councilmembers

Yay

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay. All opposed say no.

Mayor Ledbetter

Moving forward.

City Attorney

Okay. Your memo regarding the change in the ordinance for police chief.

Yes, I have that. And what I did is, I reviewed everything in the charter, absolutely provides for the Mayor to have the ability to appoint a police force. And I attached the charter and highlighted the part of that charter. And then further, this is how it's set up, Woodbury has a strong Mayor form of government, which allows the mayor to have the power to appoint department heads, which is consistent with how the charter is laid out. So, it's absolutely within the Mayor's ability to be able to appoint the police chief.

No, this is coming from what I was asked to look at regarding resignation, removal, death or disability of police chief in Section 14-45.

And to do anything and to change that would just put it in direct conflict with the charter. So, it would not be my recommendation to make that change to Section 14-45. During the resignation, removal, death or disability of the police chief.

Ronnie Garrett

So good. Danielle, I am looking at section 9 of the charter powers of the Mayor and Council. There in the very first sentence it's saying mayor and council;

City Attorney

Then, you drop down to the third of the paragraph that I have highlighted. It says the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem shall appoint when necessary police force to assist the marshal or Chief of Police in discharge of such duties, that sounds like to me the mayor can appoint a police chief.

City Attorney

I'm sorry, I didn't catch that last bit that he can appoint the police chief.

Ronnie Garrett

You cannot without consent again.

City Attorney

This goes back to the discussion that we had a while back whether or not that he can appoint the police chief and whether or not has to be approval, but ultimately how it works with a strong Mayor form of government and I cannot find anything that is different within the charter. The mayor is absolutely allowed to appoint or fire chief and department heads.

City Attorney

I didn't look at long term, but I mean, there might be a position or place somewhere within the charter or ordinance that says, you know, ultimately, to consent but how it works is that say, if y'all the council did not approve, the mayor still has the ability to go back and rehire that person. That's how a strong form of Mayor government works.

Ronnie Garrett

Well, I think we have a hybrid form of government. I do not think that was strong mayor or weak mayor, which is the case in a lot of cities.

Ronnie Garrett

Everything I see and it looks like that this is form of government, Mayor
The Mayor of Woodbury can't vote and cannot veto.

City Attorney

Right. The mayor is the Chief Executive Officer for contracts and stuff like that

Ronnie Garrett

I'm gonna read to you from section 14-42

Police Chief shall be appointed by the mayor by and with the advice and consent of the City Council.

City Attorney

So how that works is that the mayor determines who he appoints. And then ultimately the city council can approve or disapprove. Okay, if it is disapproved, we start back over, so basically you go around and around in this situation.

When a department head is appointed, it's ultimately the mayor who can appoint or dismiss a department head and understand that 14-42 states that with consent of the Council and that is you, would vote, I guess making it permanent. But say you voted that it wouldn't be permanent then that Police Chief or whatever department head would be let go at that point. Then the next step is that the mayor has the ability to appoint that department head again.

Ronnie Garrett

So, really the mayor could appoint anybody that he wants to, without consent of the city council at all. Is that what you're saying?

City Attorney

Ultimately, yes, he can appoint the department heads and it provides him the ability to appoint the department heads, which is very consistent with a strong form of Mayor government.

Ronnie Garrett

Well, how do we get around this statement by and with the advice and consent of city council, because that ultimately goes to whether or not if it's approved long term or not. I mean, it can be put before the city council. But ultimately how it works is that the mayor gets the first go around. And if y'all decide not to go forward with a mayor's decision, then he still gets the next go around. And understand what you're saying in reading that section. And it still follows the charter, he can go and he can get consent and approval with y'all. But ultimately, the decision of who's going to be that department head stays with the mayor.

Ronnie Garrett

Looking at section 34 of the charter.

Said mayor and council shall have power and authority to elect the city marshal, who shall be the chief of police of the city and as many policemen as in their judgment they may see proper; It says again, mayor and council.

City attorney

And if you look through the charter most of the thing says, Mayor and council

Well, the Mayor and council mean mayor and council for ultimate final approval.

City Attorney

But who always gets the decision to appoint the person for the department head will be the Mayor based on the charter, and based on how this form of government is set up within the City of Woodbury. I don't know how else to break it down.

I guess if you want to give me more questions then, I can look into them and try to answer them more thoroughly on your next the next meeting, but I mean, bottom line is how it's set up. The mayor's the one that gets to appoint the department head.

Ronnie Garrett

I will refer you to Section 14-45.

City Attorney

Yes, I have it

Ronnie Garrett

In the event of resignation, removal, death or disability of the police chief, the mayor shall appoint the chief until removal of such disability or until a successor has been duly appointed.

City Attorney

Yes. Okay, And I have that and that is exactly what I was asked to look at...and that's where I mean, it absolutely. It states multiple places. That it is the mayor that gets the ability to do that. It's in many sections...and this is all consistent with everything within the charter and how the government form is set up within the city.

Ronnie Garrett

So, what's your opinion?

I do not see any inconsistencies. I do not see any issues with anything in this ordinance. If anything needs to be changed as far as that goes then this is a situation that everything would need to be completely revamped and put before the General Assembly.

Ronnie Garrett

I'm looking at the Department of Water sewage treatment and the ordinance says a director of waterworks and sewage treatment shall be appointed by the Mayor by and with the advice and consent of the city council

City Attorney

Yes, it does in with consent of the council, but how the government form is set up within the city of Woodbury. The mayor gets to make that appointment.

Ronnie Garrett

I know it's set up based on the charter.

City Attorney

And then with the intent in mind that they will not be totally controlled by one individual, the mayor or the council, as far as employees and director go, okay,

Mayor Ledbetter

So, a legal opinion has been rendered. And I would encourage you to have a conversation with Danielle. Ronnie if you want to continue this conversation, but in lieu of time, let's continue on. Danielle the broadband ordinance you're okay with that?

City Attorney

Yes, I did not see any issues.

Mayor Ledbetter

Okay. We've already talked about it and it had already been approved. Correct. Okay. The next up on the agenda for you then, was the zoning ordinance the legal opinion for the zoning ordinance?

City Attorney

Yes, that's correct.

So, I was asked to look at the zoning ordinance and map to go through it. I have gone through it extensively. I cannot, I do not see any issues. My opinion looking at it is that there's no inconsistency. There's no issues within the zoning ordinance. And I believe the question was that, or the statement was that the zoning map was not adopted with the zoning ordinance. Is that correct, Mr. Garrett?

Ronnie Garrett

Yeah, the zoning map that shows the new zoning district we had about four or five zoning districts prior to the adoption of this ordinance. Now we've got 15 or 16 zoning districts. They're not shown on a map.

So how do we determine where a particular zone is?

City Attorney

Whether or not the map was adopted with the zoning ordinance, everything I've looked at, all of that was done correctly. And if it's in there it is not an issue as far as the zoning ordinance being adopted in the map. So, all of that is legal and perfectly fine. Now, if y'all are seeing that the map needs to be updated, that's not going to render the ordinance itself invalid. Then, it would just have to go through and have the map updated, but just as far as the ordinance being valid, where it stands with everything that has been adopted, it's a valid ordinance.

Mayor Ledbetter

Yes, so Nathan has reviewed the ordinance. Danielle's now had the opportunity to review the ordinance, and Municode (as of tomorrow) will begin their review of the ordinance.

Ronnie Garrett

Danielle, I want to read a code section to you get your opinion.

OCGA §36-66-3. And this is from the 2019 edition of the OCGA. They have no supplement. But it reads zoning ordinance mean and ordinance or resolution on the local government establishing procedures and zones or districts within respective territorial boundaries which regulate the uses and developed standards of property within such zones or districts. The term also includes the zoning map adopted in conjunction with a zone ordinance, which showed the zones and district and zone classification of area.

City Attorney

Yes, sir. I read over that ordinance. I read over that Section.

Ronnie Garrett

Well, see what we just take our zoning map. And until we get that done, we need to suspend any zoning application.

City Attorney

Where it stands right now, and I believe you were involved in the case that says that even if a zoning map there's an issue with a zoning map or conflict with his own map, it's the case for Meriwether County. It states that does not render the zoning ordinance itself invalid. It just needs to be dated in adopted if that's what needs to be done. It can be supplemented, but even if you have two different maps and they're in complete conflict, it does not render the zoning ordinance itself invalid. So, it would not be my opinion that anything needs to be suspended at this point.

Ronnie Garrett

Well, what is your opinion about the city continue to operate using the current zoning ordinance?

City Attorney

The zoning ordinance itself is valid with a map as its adopted, and there's not going to be an issue with them continuing to operate with the current adopted zoning ordinance.

Ronnie Garrett

What is your opinion of adopting a historic district is that in your opinion, is that a domino effect? Because it regulates the property, right? How they use a property.

City Attorney

Which one are you talking about?

Ronnie Garrett

Adoption of a historic district.

City Attorney

There will be regulations on the property owner, if that's done.

Ronnie Garrett

So, is it your opinion that it is like zoning ordinance as far as if regulating it?

City Attorney

Yes, I would have to look at it completely to see if it comes into enough that it might be that the zoning ordinance needs to be amended to adopt those requirements, but without having it in front of

me, I can't give you an opinion, but that doesn't have anything to do with whether or not the current zoning ordinance is valid or legal.

Yeah, I'm fine with that.

But we're, we're moving to something else that you need me to look at.

I'm just trying to make sure I'm taking notes and know what I need to investigate.

Ronnie Garrett

Okay, reason I asked about historic districts because the city council getting ready to adopt it.

And I just want to make sure that we do that.

And we need to have public hearings.

Mayor Ledbetter

I agree wholeheartedly, I think it's the right thing to do because what the historical preservation district affords, the properties within that district will gain some tax credits. That's also for everything that they give up, you should get something and give us the right to insert the changes to a historical piece of property and you should get credit for that. I think that's the right thing to do. I think it takes good care of our citizens.

City Attorney

Absolutely. I mean, I think that's something that we'll need to look at. I just need to go through everything and then we'll make sure that everything is done appropriately and legally.

Mayor Steve Ledbetter

Absolutely. The only way to do it professional, firm and fair.

Is there any new business?

Any Council Member comments.

All right, I'd entertain a motion for Adjournment

Carolyn Ledbetter made motion to adjourn

Ronnie Garrett second

All approved

We are adjourned. Thank you for joining. See you next month here in City Hall.

