



CITY OF BROOKLET

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Joe Grooms III, Mayor
Bradley Anderson, Mayor Pro-Term
Nicky Gwinnett, Councilman
Rebecca Kelly, Councilwoman
James Harrison, Councilman
Johnathan Graham, Councilman

City Attorney
Hugh Hunter

City Clerk
Lori Phillips

AUGUST 10, 2023

WORK SESSION

6:30 PM

MINUTES

Members Present: Mayor Joe Grooms, III, Mayor Pro-Tem Brad Anderson, Councilmembers Nicky Gwinnett, Rebecca Kelly, Johnathan Graham, and James Harrison.

Members Absent: City Clerk Lori Phillips

1. **Call to order and welcome - Mayor Grooms, III**
 - a. Invocation

2. **Consideration of a motion to approve the agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda and to add under discussion Item# 3.14. Drainage Problem on Weyerhaeuser Property on Brooklet Leefield Road due to Beaver Dams per Nicky Gwinnett.

Motion: Johnathan Graham
Second: Rebecca Kelly
Ayes: Rebecca Kelly, James Harrison, Brad Anderson, Nicky Gwinnett, and Johnathan Graham
Nayes: None
Motion carried 5-0

3. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**
 - 3.1. **Package Sale of Distilled Spirits Referendum Review**

The referendum states the following:
O. C. G. A. §§ 3-4-40 and 3-4-41 authorizes the sale of distilled spirits by the package in municipalities where the issuance of such licenses has been approved

by a referendum of the voters; and whereas, such referendum may be initiated upon the adoption of a resolution or ordinance of the municipality pursuant to O. C. G. A. § 3-4-41; and whereas, the Mayor and Council of the City of Brooklet are desirous of allowing the voters of said City to determine whether or not the City of Brooklet should be authorized to issue licenses for the sale of distilled spirits by the package; and now therefore, be it resolved that the governing authority of the City of Brooklet hereby calls for a referendum election for the purpose of determining whether or not the City of Brooklet shall be authorized to issue licenses to sell distilled spirits by the package, and that said election shall be held in accordance with O. C. G. A. § 21-2-540 on November 7, 2023.

3.2. Relocation of the Brooklet Precinct for Conducting the County Elections

The Mayor and Council are okay with the county renting the Randy Newman Community Center; however, they would like to draft an Intergovernmental Agreement once a rate is established. There will be more discussion at the August 17th City Council meeting.

3.3. Survey for 416 North Cromley Road, the Brooklet Voting Precinct needed to get a plat to attach to the legal description (update)

A recommendation will be made based on the quotes obtained at the August 17th City Council Meeting.

3.4. Bank account for PD for seizures (Rebecca Kelly) (Chief Roberts)

Per Councilwoman Kelly, "Chief Roberts and Police Clerk Lisa Tollison have been cleaning out the evidence in the property room and he's been able to get information on something that we haven't been doing, but we're supposed to be doing when they seize money, it has to go into a bank account that draws interest and their clerk has governance over and not anybody else, but I know we had that discussion before about the Police Department having a bank account and we're not talking about a bank account, where they are going to pay salaries of this money, but we're talking about a specific kind of bank account."

Per Chief Roberts, "this is a police matter. In other words, it is not a City Council matter and I will tell you why, because you know, I just got audited, if you may remember, two months ago. It was a two-day audit, they came down and they looked over all my operating procedures on evidence, they looked through all of our papers and we were one of the very few police departments in Georgia that had absolutely no fault. Police management evidence is outlined in here, whenever it comes to the time that money is being moved, we go to the Clerk of the city, and we open a separate account, it cannot be tied to the city, because it is evidence. It cannot have anything to do with the city, because it is evidence. The amount is under \$250 and we are not even ready to move it, when it comes to moving, the evidence, there is only three people who can move the

evidence and that is my evidence technician, who, by the way, is doing a fantastic job, she is educated herself and she is, talking about Lisa Tollison, and myself and the Superior Court judge, we are the only ones who can touch that money. So, whenever it comes time, that we get ready, right now, we are doing nothing but moving the Police Department, whenever it comes time to move the money, we will go to Mrs. Lori, and open a separate account because let us be honest, you do not want your name tied to this. This is criminal evidence, this is police business and I am sorry, but you cannot get involved in it. So, I am just giving you this as a courtesy to let you see what it is and that we have got it under control.”

Per Mayor Pro-Tem Anderson, “the SOP indicates the property custodian, Lisa Tollison, and then a second signer, is clean, whether that be the Chief of Police or whether that be another sworn officer. Ultimately, for you to open an account, I think the city needs to approve you to do that based on the state auditor and so we can approve you to do that through City Clerk Lori Phillips by doing that, but I think what makes sense is having whoever your custodian, which is Lisa Tollison and then the Chief of Police. You all will be the signers on it and it will take two signers on that, it is not what the SOP says, but I think that is clean and a good accounting measure. The City Council can authorize the Chief of Police, based on this language, to set up an account this way and I would suggest it be done at our local bank, Morris Bank. The Council will go ahead at the August 17th City Council meeting and authorize the creation of the account.”

3.5. Rental of a mower to keep the PD practice range mowed (Rebecca Kelly)

The grass at the Brooklet PD practice range needs to be cut for the officers to be able to practice. Councilwoman Kelly suggested renting a lawnmower, Councilman Gwinnett said it is too thick for a lawnmower, and it needs to be done with a tractor. Mayor Grooms suggested that once it does get cut to spray it to keep it from growing back so fast. Mayor Pro-Tem Anderson suggested renting a mower for half a day or contracting with a company to do it. Councilwoman Kelly and Chief Roberts will check around and see what they can do about getting this issue addressed.

3.6. Coastal Regional Commission Plan Implementation Meeting Update from 07/26/23 (Rebecca Kelly)

Councilwoman Kelly met with Aaron Carpenter, the Planning Director for the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC). Every couple of years, the State of Georgia requires Regional Commissions to conduct *Implementation Assistance Meetings* with their local governments. Mr. Carter advised her that Brooklets five five-year comprehensive plan will be coming up for renewal next year. He also talked about different kinds of grants that they offer to municipalities and about the Southern Crescent Regional Commission and they have a Sid Grant, and there is a federal grant that was approved in 2008, but this is the first year that they have funded it and you can get up to \$500,000. Councilwoman Kelly contacted

Wesley Parker, the City Engineer, to tell him about the grant and send him the information and he stated that this would be great for the new water main that Brooklet needs and he asked if it would be okay for him to write it for upgrading the old well because Brooklet might have a better chance of getting that as a bigger need and Councilwoman Kelly told him it would be okay for him to do this. said I If the city can get \$500,000, that is \$500,000, the taxpayers do not have to pay, there is only a 20% match and that is low for the match. So, Wesley is in the process of doing that. They also talked about who was going to help him with the grant, and the regional place has free service to do that and he has used them in the past but not recently and he was more favorable to the people who would help him get the other grant. Councilwoman Kelly told him to use his judgment because Brooklet wants to have the best opportunity to get the grant. The other grant that Mr. Carter spoke about that he helped Risborough and some other small towns get, was a \$50,000 grant towards a new police vehicle. Councilwoman Kelly investigated the grant because that would be great if Brooklet could get that but we are too affluent; you must meet a certain poverty level and which our town does not qualify. Brooklet has a 7.3% poverty rate, even though the poverty is higher than the lowest poverty level that they have in the county. So that is not a possible grant for Brooklet. Councilwoman Kelly will be contacting Mr. Carter again because he helps people get grants for different things and to telling him that they are all for looking at something else for the Police Department that is not dependent upon being poor. Mr. Carter was helpful and he got right back to Councilwoman Kelly with the information that was shared tonight.

3.7. Streets in need of resurfacing (Brad Anderson)

At the last meeting, it was discussed prioritizing the streets that need to be resurfaced. There is between \$800,000.00 to \$850,000.00 left in TSPLOST; Councilman Gwinnett has identified that Joiner Road is on the LMIG list, however, that may have to wait due the new well being installed in the near future, the city may have to dig up Joiner Road depending what size line is already there. After a brief discussion, the council decided to study the list of roads that were presented and then rank them from most important to least and start there. The council will review and study the list and bring it back before the council at the August 17, 2023 city council meeting.

3.8. Street Improvements and Striping Improvements Projects (PE23193) (Nicky Gwinnett)

After a brief discussion, the council decided to remove Joiner Road from the list; more discussion will be August 17, 2023, at the city council meeting.

3.9. Review of a quote received from John Deere for a tractor, loader, root grapple, and a fixed pallet fork in the amount of \$55,875.00 (Jim Harrison)

Councilman Gwinnett stated that, when you lease something, that is no maintenance included. The lease rate on that tractor is 3.65% for 24 months; two payments, a payment each year of \$14,996.00 and then after the two years, you have got a residual payout roughly of \$20,400.00 and that can vary depending on the condition of the tractor and if you look at it that way, you'll pay \$50,476.00 for the tractor and loader only and then the gravel and the set of forks, and the valve that it takes to make the grapple work, so if you add the three attachments that we need, we will spend an additional \$16,000.00, roughly above the \$50,476.00. Mayor Pro-Tem Anderson feels that the key to leasing equipment is, if you have a piece of equipment that you know is going to work hard, it makes sense to lease it, that way you do not keep a worn-out piece of equipment, but if it is a piece of equipment that is taken good care of and service for long life, then purchasing it does make sense. The best quote for a batwing mower came from Low Country Machinery for \$20,172, which is a 10 1/2-foot half bat wing. This item will go on the August 17, 2023, City Council agenda as a line item, for the purpose of calling for a roll call vote on whether to approve or deny.

- 3.10. Review of a quote received from East Main Equipment for a modern ag 10' right-hand offset flex predator roadside rotary cutter in the amount of \$22,994.00 (Jim Harrison)**

This item was omitted.

- 3.11. Review of a quote received from Low Country Machinery for a 10.51 batwing in the amount of \$20,172.00 and a 12 batwing in the amount of \$23,813.17 (Jim Harrison)**

This item will go on the August 17, 2023, City Council agenda as a line item, for the purpose of calling for a roll call vote on whether to approve or deny.

- 3.12. BCDA request to use the Festival Grounds & the Randy Newman Community Center for the 2023 Brooklet Peanut Festival (Ellen Perkins)**

After a brief discussion, the council would like for Clerk Lori Phillips to research last year's fees charged in order to stay consistent with what they were charged for using the Randy Newman Community Center and the festival grounds.

- 3.13. Tapping and Connection Permit/Process for water users outside the city limits**
Midgard Self-Storage, located at 19451 Hwy 80, Statesboro, GA., has contacted the city and they are interested in tapping into the city water main, but the property is not in the city limits of Brooklet. Councilman Gwinnett has no problem with them doing so if they understand that it is their responsibility to connect their line to ours and they would have to pay an out-of-town rate. They would also have to sign an agreement saying that when the property becomes contiguous, they would annex into the city of Brooklet. The only problem is,

when the water rates were increased, no one thought about an out-of-town water usage rate, so before this is agreed on, that will need to be added and approved in the ordinance as well as fire protection and an out-of-town garbage rate. In order to move forward with this request, the city will need a more thorough application explaining what their actual intent is. The Mayor and Council will ask Clerk Phillips to reach out to Bill Powell with Georgia Rural Water about adding the fees and such to the city ordinance.

3.14. Drainage Problem on Weyerhaeuser Property on Brooklet Leefield Road due to Beaver Dams (Nicky Gwinnett)

The beaver problem is on a Brooklet tract in Bulloch County and the city is requesting permission to dig out the beaver dams to help speed up the drainage in the city of Brooklet. City Attorney Hunter will be speaking with Gordon Moss about a license agreement that will grant the city of Brooklet access to the property to mechanically break/disrupt the existence of beaver dams on their property. This item will be added to the consent agenda for August 17, 2023 city council meeting for approval.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn

Motion: Johnathan Graham

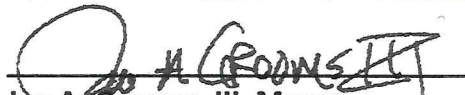
Second: James Harrison

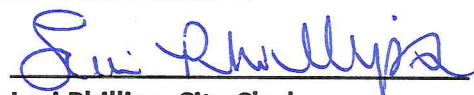
Ayes: Rebecca Kelly, James Harrison, Brad Anderson, Nicky Gwinnett, and Johnathan Graham

Nays: None

Motion carried 5-0

Approved this 5th day of October, 2023.


Joe A. Grooms, III, Mayor


Lori Phillips, City Clerk

