

# TOWN OF SHARPSBURG

WORK SESSION  
A & O Bridges Community Center  
105 Main Street, Sharpsburg GA

September 19, 2022

## Work Session Minutes

**6:00 P.M.**

**Call Work Session Meeting to Order:**

Mayor Cole called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**Establish Quorum:**

At the beginning of the meeting there was no Quorum present.

**Those present at the beginning of the meeting were:**

Blue Cole- Mayor and Alexander Edge- Post 2. Tom Teagle- Post 3 arrived at the meeting at 6:11 p.m. Upon Mr. Teagle's arrival, a quorum of Councilmembers was established.

**Those do not present throughout the meeting were:**

Standley D. Parten- Post 1 and Elizabeth Good- Post 4

**Old Business:**

**1. Master Planning- Overview**

Mayor Cole and all those present discussed the beginning steps of having a Master Plan in preparation for Sharpsburg's future.

Mayor Cole stated he wanted to have an overall discussion on how to prepare for growth both internally in Sharpsburg and externally outside of Sharpsburg. He stated there are some large parcels outside of Sharpsburg and, given the growth of the area, what would it look like should the parcels want to be a part of Sharpsburg. He utilized a map and showed some of the parcels that he suggested may be open for expansion into the town. He further stated he wanted a discussion on where Council sees itself and the town in the next ten to fifteen years. He speculated on how the state highways that go through town would be affected and utilized as growth comes including how to plan for growth of East Coweta High School such as placing sidewalks to the school. Councilmember Edge stated that it is a good idea to have sidewalks in town, but he also suggested getting some of the business owners and citizens so they can have input on the direction and future of Sharpsburg. Mayor Cole stated he wanted to talk to the residents in the unincorporated portion of Wellsburg Station to see if they want to be part of town. He stated that the advantages would be trash service, code enforcement, light poles, street striping, and discounted rates at the Community Center- but he did not know if that was enough for 60% of the residents to agree to the referendum and then put it to the vote. He stated that the addition of the remainder of Wellsburg Station would provide more tax revenue and would provide more LMIG money for the town. Mayor Cole stated that the taxes would not be more since the town's millage rate is lower

than the counties, but the county does charge more to provide services to the town. Councilmember Teagle stated that installing sidewalks may not be the best move due to the limited number of people who walk since most drive their cars. He questioned if a sidewalk was needed if no one would use it, like would a person build a senior center if there were no seniors in the area.

Mayor and Council reviewed the agenda packet and discussed the information contained in it that was as provided by Georgia Power. Mayor Cole stated additional information would be provided by Georgia Power for nearby communities surrounding the town. Mayor Cole explained the information could be used to convince others to come to the town and invest in it.

Mayor Cole suggested the town could ask assistance from Georgia Power to help with their bucket trucks to help with repairs to the flagpole and to help set up decorations for Christmas as part of collaborating with the company on behalf of the town. Town Administrator Jones stated that Georgia Power is also working on right of way in both Grantville and Moreland. They could also be utilized, if able, to help clear the right of way.

Mayor Cole stated he wanted to discuss the different areas in town and how it would be characterized by the various state highways. The Councilmembers looked at a map being projected on the screen and discussed some of the properties around town and adjacent to town- and spoke about the challenges and potential benefits of the properties. He stated this would help guide the conversations with developers and GDOT to make improvements and to put plans in place for the betterment of town and the residents around town. Mayor Cole said he saw many things coming and he wanted the town to be prepared. He added he wanted to make sure there are buffers so that the town and the roads are not stripped bare of trees during development. Councilmember Teagle stated buffers could be put into the ordinances. Councilmember Teagle added that he thought there should be an effort to reduce the number of trees being cut in town. It was mentioned that the tree ordinance is on the Town's website and available, but that most people do not know to look or even know where to find the ordinance. Discussion resumed about properties along State Highway 154 and the potential of annexing some of the properties on the road.

Mayor Cole stated another decision is how housing will look in town after sewer comes to town. Councilmember Teagle questioned if residential sewer can be had, and Mayor Cole replied that Coweta County prevents residential sewer but that policies can change. Mayor Cole stated the County Commissioners have taken a political position not to allow for residential sewers, but that there are some who are asking for residential sewer. He suspected that the use of residential sewer will come with some type of tradeoff.

Mayor Cole stated another challenge is to take better care of downtown, and he thought that if the town enters a contract to clean the sidewalks, to spray the weeds, to pressure wash the sidewalks, and to enforce the building code. Councilmember Teagle agreed stating he wanted the town to be better and he was upset that mattresses were at the street for three weeks before being picked up. Mayor Cole suggested making an offer or a policy that bulk pickups are done behind Town Hall so that it is no longer at the side of the road. He stated another option would be if bulk pickups are placed at the side of the road, then an agreement could be in play that would have someone remove them and bring them to the back of Town Hall for pickup. Councilmember Teagle suggested another option is to put a dumpster at Town Hall on some regular schedule so people can dump their garbage and bulk pickups so that it does not trash up the roads and does not fill up the Town's garbage can, and he thought this could be paid for by the town. Councilmember Teagle continued by saying the Town Hall and Community Center could be cleaned up and painted.

Councilmember Edge questioned if there was a need for a bar-b-que pit at Town Hall and suggested that the space could be used for something else. Mayor Cole said he envisioned using the bar-b-que pit for community events. Councilmember Teagle stated it was oversized and just outside of the Town Hall- creating an eyesore. Councilmember Edge stated that the town needs to take care of its own property before it expands out to others. He added that the Gazebo looks good but could use a freshening up. Councilmember Teagle stated that funds need to be spent to ensure that the town is cleaned. He said at some point of time there will be planters and signs, and someone will have to upkeep them. He suggested that the town- by setting the tone- would then be able to go to others and have them clean up. He added that he is an old man and yet in his remaining years he expects some of the buildings in town to fall in since nothing is being done with them. Discussion occurred about getting an agreement to cut the right of way

along the town streets and how right of ways are defined. It was agreed that by the town making a start then others would follow suit and would improve their properties.

Councilmember Teagle stated he wanted to sit down with the attorney and ask what can be done since, in times past, Council is informed of what it cannot do. He said while not usually having liberal tendencies, he did not want to see a citizen hurt or killed during his time on council because of a fire resulting from an electrical problem which might have been able to get corrected or due to a lack of a smoke detector. His wanted to find out from the Town Attorney what could be done to force inspections and necessary repairs. Mayor Cole replied that Councilmember Teagle could schedule time to meet with the attorney and go over the issues and determine how to go over the matters. Town Administrator Jones stated he would set up a meeting with the attorney and go with Councilmember Teagle to determine what could be done and to discuss what goals could be done.

Town Administrator Jones suggested entering into Intergovernmental Agreements with other governmental entities to help meet the needs of the town. It was discussed that a local town had an agreement with Safebuilt to enforce its building code and that Mr. Jones would look into getting that information. He said the agreement, as he understood it, would provide active code enforcement. Councilmember Teagle stated he thought the concept was great, but he was suspicious that a tremendous portion of the Zoning Ordinance did not apply to Sharpsburg as it was influenced by other governments. Councilmember Teagle suggested that before Zoning Ordinances are enforced the town needed to ensure that the ordinances it has are what it wants. Mayor Cole stated opening that can of worms would entail the complete rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance, that a discussion about the rewriting of the ordinance had been held with Three Rivers Regional Commission and it would cost the town between \$15,000 to \$20,000. He added that the town would also have to give Three Rivers Regional Commission an idea of what it wants with its Zoning Ordinance. Councilmember Teagle reiterated that the Zoning Ordinance needs to be reviewed and revised as needed to ensure that what is done in town meets the town's desire, however, he added there are some things that can be done without an ordinance such as placing benches at Town Hall and the Gazebo. Councilmember Edge stated he was behind on some of the ordinance but agreed that some money needed to be spent to make the place look good with planters and signs. He added that someone needs to be involved who can effectuate the plans- like how Senoia did by bringing in people to make upscale Senoia. He stated it would take time to clean up the ordinances but cleaning up the Town Hall and sidewalks would be needed. Councilmember Edge added that doing something with the Beckom House was a priority. Councilmember Teagle stated there were projects that could be done simultaneously such as cleaning up Town Hall and the sidewalks, while at the same time taking a serious look at the Zoning Ordinance.

Mayor Cole agreed with the solutions provided and stated that he wanted short, intermediate, and long-term solutions and goals to be considered and proposed. Councilmember Teagle stated he was all for involving the landowners and property owners as they need to have input into the direction of the town, but before they were brought in, the Council needed to have its own ideas, plans, and consensus before going to the public. He said the public does not need to be brought in until a plan is formulated that can be discussed and developed with the public's input and support since it would potentially be a waste of everyone's time.

Councilmember Teagle asked if there was an update on potential sewer funds approved through the federal budget. Mayor Cole replied he had not update specific to Sharpsburg, but he had heard of another jurisdiction that had be dropped- so jurisdictions are starting to fall from the budget.

Councilmember Teagle suggested talking to the Town of Turin about combining a police force, particularly with enforcement on Highway 16 and 54. It was agreed to ask GMA to provide guidance on how to implement a police force. Mayor Cole stated he was not necessarily opposed to having a police force, but he had concerns about insurance and liability for a police force. Councilmember Teagle agreed but suggested that if the town is going to expand its borders, then a police department or police officer may be another draw for the citizens. Councilmember Edge suggested asking the Coweta County Sheriff's Office to provide additional patrols. Mayor Cole replied that the Sheriff's Department had been asked in times past, but the residents he heard from stated they never saw an officer.

Mayor Cole reiterated that he wanted the town to set goals on how to move from stagnation to growing. He suggested that the town could offer façade grants to get the town looking as it should. Councilmember Teagle agreed that may be

a solution. Councilmember Edge added that lessons could be learned from how the Town of Senoia revamped its image.

Mayor Cole informed all that Senoia was able to do as they did by being prepared. He said the Town- about ten years before the movie studios came to town- went out and signed a bond for sewer. He stated that two investors then came in and started buying property from approximately four families who owned most of the property in Senoia. He said that as a person sold a lot to the investor, the agreement was for the funds for purchasing an empty lot be utilized to improve an existing structure owned by one of the four original property owners. He said this process continued with empty lots being built by the investors, and the monies for the purchase of the empty lots being utilized by property owners for revitalizing and repairing their existing structures. He said once everyone saw the improvements then others joined in with that effort continuing until the movie studios came to town. Mayor Cole concluded that if that is the direction the town wants to go then it does not have far to go to meet those goals. Councilmember Teagle added that similar could be done with runway houses from the airport. Councilmember Edge agreed there is plenty to offer, but the town must be appealing before it can be marketed.

Polly Garlington added that the town needs to establish a Downtown Development Association. Councilmember Edge added that a committee needed to be established to help get ideas and to get people involved in improving the town. Mayor Cole added that the town is close to having pieces come together. Councilmember Teagle stated he was concerned that without something in work with then the town would be open to anybody's idea on what could be built. He concluded that the Council needs to take a few bulls by the horn, but that it takes a first step. Council did not vote or take any action during the discussion.

**a. Georgia Power Presentation**

Representatives from Georgia Power did not come to the meeting and no presentation was given by Georgia Power.

The Council did not vote on this matter.

**New Business:**

**1. Other Items if Required**

No other items were discussed.

**Adjournment:**

Mayor Cole adjourned the September 19, 2022, Work Session Meeting at 7:38 p.m.

No vote was taken at any time during the meeting.

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Floyd L. Jones, Administrator

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Blue Cole, Mayor

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Sharpsburg Town Council, in Sharpsburg, Georgia, on the fourteenth day of November 2022.

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Floyd L. Jones, Administrator

