

TOWN OF SHARPSBURG

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
A & O Bridges Community Center
105 Main Street, Sharpsburg GA
September 11, 2023

MINUTES

6:00PM

Call Council Meeting to Order: Mayor Cole called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Cole asked all to join in the pledge.

Establish Quorum: Town Administrator Jones stated that a quorum of the Council was present.

Those Present: Blue Cole – Mayor; Standley D. Parten – Council Member - Post 1; Alexander Edge – Post 2; Tom Teagle – Post #3; Brad Sears – Town Attorney

Those Absent: None

Guests: Polly Garlington – Town Resident; April Yarbrough – Town Business Owner; Kevin and Denise Moeggenberg – Town Business Owners; John and Barbara Morris – Sharpsburg - Coweta County resident; Maxwell Britton – Coweta County resident; Denver Payton, Coweta County - Sharpsburg resident; Heidi Becker, Coweta County - Sharpsburg resident; Justin Halford;

Presentations: None

Review/Approval of Minutes:

1. **August 7, 2023 Minutes** – Council Member Parten moved to approve the minutes and Council Member Teagle seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.
2. **August 21, 2023 Work Session Minutes** – Update from Mayor Cole the minutes are to read “library shelves were moved to storage container”. Council Member Teagle moved to approve the minutes with this correction and Council Member Edge seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

Public Hearing: None

New Business:

1. **Review- August 2023 Budget** – Administrator Jones gave overview on a few line items. He explained that at the end of August we have completed two-thirds of 2023. We have exceeded better than expected in the Revenue category on motor vehicle taxes, alcohol licenses, and LOST income. We are about to exceed our community center rental and instructor fees budget. One line that stands out differently is personal property and insurance premium taxes are at \$1500 with a budget of \$18,000 but those start coming in in October, November, and December. Expense categories are higher than anticipated in legal fees due to having an election in November, 3 ordinances, our GFL contract, the DDA, and SPLOST; also, Payroll and IT in a Box due to a new hire, higher provider costs; Utilities are higher due to price increases to water and electricity. Mayor Cole interjected that Gas Utilities cost is at 157% due to two bills in a quarter. Our Printing Services are higher because of the Town Hall’s copier breakdown – having to rent a machine for three months while waiting for delivery of our purchased copier which was not budgeted. However, costs have stabilized since receiving our newly purchased machine. Council Member Teagle asked about trends in utilities costs. Administrator Jones will provide a workup of costs. Off topic Council Member Teagle mentioned that we have a flag up on the flagpole; it has been repaired. It is a fitting day as it is September 11th.

2. **Fence Quote- Clements Fence Company** – Mayor Cole discussed the purchase and installation of a fence from the contained down 186 feet / 30 x 10 feet length by the playground, so kids will not get hurt by tumbling down an irregular section beyond the sidewalk. There is a choice of crossbuck or chain-link. Administrator Jones asked how this would be funded, by SPLOST Funds or General Funds. He asked this because we do not have specified funds for this purchase. Mayor Cole indicated that General Funds would be used. Council Member Edge asked for clarification on the location of the placement and gate which was given by Mayor Cole. He also added that Clements Fence Company has been used before by the Town and fits our Procurement Policy. Council Member Parten moved to use general funds in the amount of \$5,184 for installation of the chain-link fencing as opposed to the lesser cost of the crossbuck fencing at \$4,476. Council Member Edge seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-1 with Council Member Teagle voting in opposition.
3. **LMIG- Street Striping** – Mayor Cole stated that this was brought up earlier in the year and he wanted to revisit getting the streets scraped and cleaned. Two quotes were obtained from Mid-State Striping and Tidwell Traffic Solutions for the re-striping of Terrentine and Main Streets. Neither of these vendors have been used before by the Town of Sharpsburg. Discussion about double yellow lines vs. white edging along the grass line and how that area would be cleaned up, about the types of materials contained in the quotes, and the associated costs contained in the quotes and where money would come from. It was ascertained that LMIG funds would cover this expense. Council decided more information is needed before a vote would be taken.
4. **Discussion concerning Rachel Ferguson Donation** – Mayor Cole explained that an anonymous donation was made back in March for \$3,000 for the purchase of new doors for the community center. At this time, however, we are revealing that Ms. Rachel Ferguson made the donation because she is asking for it to be returned. New doors were priced out with several vendors; however, costs exceeded the donation. We did spend \$350 to have the locks repaired and they are fixed. Brief discussion whether to give all of it back or reduce it by the cost of the repair. It was decided to give all of it back. Council Member Teagle moved to return the \$3,000 donation to Ms. Ferguson and Council Member Alex Edge seconded it. The motion passed 4-0-0. A check will be issued to Ms. Ferguson.
5. **Pine Straw at Community Center and Library** – Mayor Cole stated that this was a great opportunity for Council to consider. Three quotes were requested from vendors and only two came back: Arbor Valley and Landscapes. We did not hear back from Breaking Ground. Quotes were reviewed. Administrator Jones gave a historical background of the costs in 2021 costs was \$2,007.50 for 365 bales at \$5.50 a bale and in 2022 costs was \$2,133 for 316 bales at \$6.75 per bale. This year's cost for 400 bales at \$7.50 a ball, increase in number of bales included the library and new areas within the parking lot. Last year the quote was awarded to Precision Groundscapes. Council Member Teagle moved to approve that Precision Groundscapes get the job, Council Member Edge seconded it. Motion passed 4-0-0.
6. **Resolution: Surplus Materials** – Administrator Jones conversation with Council Member Teagle to remove desk in the library, and desk in container, along with scrap lumber in the container. Council Member Tom Teagle moved to approve the removal of surplus materials from the library and container and Council Member Stan Parten seconded. Motion passed 4-0-0.

Old Business:

1. **Ordinance 23-04: Post Development Stormwater Management- Second Reading** – State required update to our existing ordinance. Council Member Teagle moved to approve Ordinance 23-04 and Alex Edge seconded. Motion passed 4-0-0.
2. **Playground** – Mayor Cole recapped that this item is what the Council reviewed at the last Council Meeting to add on to the existing playground with the Huckleberry Hideout package. This would add to our playground by adding swings, a rock wall, a slide, and a hideout at this time. Other quotes were \$12,000 and \$14,000. The quote we are looking at is for \$10,000 from Swings, etc. Mayor Cole would like to see a space carved out at 38 Main St. eventually. He is proposing that this addition be put next to the old playground. Discussion and questions and answers by Council members as to the present location and future location of business, and materials, and where money would come from was held. Mayor Cole indicated that monies would come from SPLOST. Council Member Parten moved to approve the purchase of additional playground equipment. There was no second on the motion. Motion failed.

3. **Tables and Chairs** – Administrator Jones gave update. We are actively seeking who wants the tables and chairs. Coweta Fairgrounds is engaged in helping find interested parties. We need an exact time for the removal and the delivery of the new. Sixteen new 8-foot rectangular folding tables would be \$2,000 and 100 chairs are \$3,000, totaling approximately \$5,000. We have a budget of \$6,500. Budget has already been approved this is just an update. No vote or action taken.
4. **Sharpsburg Library** – Council Member Teagle gave update. Items of discussion included flooring (being the priority), furniture for librarian, and children, software and hardware for catalog system, exterior lighting, security system. Council Member Edge moved to approve the Smith's flooring quote of \$2,530 to re-do flooring and to use SPLOST funds for the flooring for the Sharpsburg Library project, Council Member Parten seconded it. Motion passed 4-0-0.
5. **GFL Proposal** – Administrator Jones gave a recap. After much research and legal negotiations with GFL, it was noted that this is the first increase in 10 years for trash removal for the Town. The increase from \$11 a can to \$16 a can for the remainder of the year, and from \$16 a can to \$22 a can until 2025. Since this increase would put us over budget, he asked for an increase to move \$1,500 to cover the anticipated increase. Council Member Parten moved to approve the proposal as written and to approve the moving of extra funds; Council Member Teagle seconded it. Motion passed 4-0-0.

Public Comments:

Discussion concerning Mayor Cole's Signing of a Letter to Governor Kemp and the Georgia General Assembly Asking for Action to Reduce Gun Violence impacting Communities: Council Members, John Morris, Maxwell Britton, Denver Payton, Elizabeth Good, and Polly Garlington questioned and discussed Mayor Cole's signing of a letter, along with thirty-nine (39) other Georgia mayors, and addressed to Georgia's Governor and General Assembly about gun violence. The council and various members of the public expressed concern that the mayor signed the letter without the Council's knowledge or approval, and that the letter appeared to speak on behalf of the town and the larger Sharpsburg community. Mayor Cole disagreed with the assessment of the letter and stated he was authorized to sign the letter since he is the mayor. Mayor Cole further stated that his signing of the letter was no different than his signatures on "Mayor of the Day" proclamations and that Council Member Teagle had also utilized his position of Council Member when he told the County Commission about his opinion on the Georgia citizens voting on paper ballots. Council Member Teagle stated that his concern was not that Mayor Cole expressed his personal views, but rather a letter addressed to the state government on matters like this that should have been brought to Council first. Extensive discussion and disagreement followed between the various Council Members and members of the public. Council Members Teagle and Edge stated Council should have been notified prior to the letter being signed. It was understood that Council Member Teagle would write a letter expressing his disagreement with the letter Mayor Cole signed.

Ms. April Yarbrough gave an update on the Downtown Development Authority meeting held on Monday, 9/11/23. The DDA would like to request \$5,000 from the Town to hold its 1st Annual Christmas Market on Main to cover expenses and to decorate the Town for the Holidays. This will be the first official fund raiser. She also requested \$8,000 annually for 2024 and 2025 to cover DDA expenses. The goal is to have other fund raisers throughout the years and to eventually stand on its own. DDA volunteers will take over decorating the Town for the Holidays.

Administrator Jones stated that this is the first time we are hearing of the monetary request being made by the DDA. However, he noted, there is \$1,000 allocated in the budget for Supplies, Festivals, and Holidays. That money could be moved over from there to the DDA, but the remainder would have to worked out from the contingency fund to cover the remaining \$4,000. He raised concern over this year's increasing expenses. Each year's budget would have to be addressed at planning time. Financials were discussed. Council Member Teagle moved to approve \$1,000 from the Supplies, Festivals, and Holidays and \$4,000 from Contingency Funds and Council Member Parten seconded it. All were in favor. 4-0-0.

Ms. Heidi Becker introduced herself as being a realtor and newly resides in Sharpsburg. She is also a professional fund raiser and offered her assistance to the Mayor and the Council. She mentioned that she started a Facebook page called Life in the Burg.

Ms. Polly Garlington commented that she thought Mayor Cole was being bullied.

Ms. Denise Moeggenberg – introduced herself as co-owner of Fayette Hobbies, a new business in town, and her former customers now know that their business is in Sharpsburg. She spoke of some of the activities and classes at their shop and is excited to be part of the community.

Ms. Sherri Woods – introduced herself as the Secretary/Treasurer of the DDA. She is the owner of The Toasty Toad and The Frigid Frog since 2011. She is excited about the new happenings in the Town and being part of this exciting time.

Ms. April Yarbrough – introduced herself as the Chair of the DDA and member of the Friends of the Library. She outlined a fundraising event for the library which includes photos with Santa, date to be determined with Administrator Jones.

Mr. Denver Payton – introduced himself as a life-long Coweta County Resident and Sharpsburg resident for 6 years.

Mr. Maxwell Britton – resident of Sharpsburg stated he thinks that Mayor Cole disenfranchised the Town Council and citizens of Sharpsburg by signing the letter to the Governor. He wanted this to be on public record. He did not respect the way Mayor Cole handled himself during this meeting. Mayor Cole answered that he wanted this to be on record that Mr. Britton is not a resident of Sharpsburg to which Council Member Teagle challenged his statement that he is a resident of Sharpsburg. Mayor Cole stated that he is not a resident of The Town of Sharpsburg and thanked Mr. Britton for his comments.

Polling of Council: Council Member Edge expressed that he disagreed with the letter, he did not know about it. He felt that the article in the Citizen newspaper of Fayette County had good questions for the Mayor of Peachtree City. He appreciates all the people that showed up for this meeting and they should not be shut down because of different opinions or passionate feelings.

Administrator's Report: Administrator Jones had a question about Library floors, if a color had been picked out. April Yarbrough said that the style was picked out and there are 6 or 7 colors, they would pick a color that would work with the existing colors inside the building.

Mayor's Updates: None

Executive Session: N/A

Adjournment: Mayor Cole asked for a motion to close the meeting. Council Member Edge moved to close the meeting and Council Member Parten seconded it. Mayor Cole closed the meeting at 7:55PM with all agenda items being covered.

Julie Stroud, Deputy Town Administrator

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Sharpsburg Town Council, in Sharpsburg, Georgia on the 2nd day of October 2023.

Julie Stroud, Deputy Town Administrator

Blue Cole, Mayor