

# City of Blue Ridge

480 West First Street • Blue Ridge, Georgia • (706) 632-2091

City Council Meeting  
January 18, 2022  
5:00 p.m.  
Blue Ridge City Hall

## MINUTES

### Present:

Mayor: Rhonda Haight

Council Members: Bill Bivins, Christy Kay, Jack Taylor, Angie Arp, William Whaley

Attorney: Chuck Conerly

Park Supervisor: Tony Byrd

Finance and Human Resource Director: Michael Richardson

City Clerk: Amy Mintz

### 1) City Clerk Call Meeting to Order

City Clerk Amy Mintz called meeting to order at 5:00pm

### 2) Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

David Haight JR led the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3) Oaths of Office for Mayor and Council Members

City Clerk Amy Mintz administered the Oaths of Office to Mayor and Council Members.

### 4) Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

a) December 21, 2021 (Council Meeting)

b) December 21, 2021 (Public Hearing)

Mayor Rhonda Haight suggested to table the minutes to give the council time to review.

**Council Member William Whaley moved to table the approval of the minutes of the meetings, until they have been corrected.**

**Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.**

**WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)**

All in favor.

Minutes for both meetings tabled.

### 5) Approval of Agenda or Motion to Amend Agenda (if applicable)

Mayor Rhonda Haight asked to amend the agenda to remove item #9 – Water Plant Surveillance System, Patrice Johnston from public comment and Item #11 – Executive Parking Contact Termination. Mayor Haight stated add Hot House Bid Award, and the Municode Ordinance.

**Council Member William Whaley moved to approve the agenda modifications.**

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**Council Member Jack Taylor seconded the motion.**

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

## **Public Comments (for all speakers who have signed up the previous week):**

### 1) Monthly Downtown Development Authority Update

Cesar Martinez stated the next DDA meeting will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup> and is normally meeting where the Council would attend, but they currently do not have a chairman since his term ended on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Once the Council appoints new members the DDA will decide who to appoint as Chairman.

### 2) Monthly Blue Ridge Business Association Update

Cesar Martinez advised February 19<sup>th</sup> is the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Fire and Ice Chili cookoff festival.

### 3) Tom Fennell – Increase of Business License

Tom Fennell came to the podium and voiced concerns regarding the increase in business license and asked the council to consider lowering it to a reasonable price with adding small increases each year.

### 4) Patrice Johnston – Dogs in the City Park

Removed from agenda.

### 5) Donna Thompson – Development

Donna Thompson asked for her name to be removed from the agenda.

## **Action Agenda Items (Items requiring the approval of the Council):**

### 1) Mayor Pro Tempore Appointment

**Council Member William Whaley moved to appoint Angie Arp.**

**Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.**

WILLIAM (M) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

Council Member Angie Arp did not vote.

### 2) City Council Appointments (charter)

#### a) City Attorney

**Council Member William Whaley moved to appoint Chuck Conerly.**

**Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.**

Council Member William Whaley stated to include the application that was made in response to our request for applicants and the fee schedule, and other agreements that have been reached in the discussions with mayor.

**Council Member Jack Taylor seconded the motion.**

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

#### b) City Clerk

Mayor Rhonda Haight asked for a motion to appoint Amy Mintz as City Clerk.

**Council Member Jack Taylor made a motion to appoint Amy Mintz.**

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Council Member William Whaley seconded.

WILLIAM (S) ANGIE (X) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

c) Police Chief

Mayor Rhonda Haight recommended Johnny Scarce, who has served for many years, be reappointed.

Council Member William Whaley moved to appoint Johnny Scarce.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

d) City Treasurer

Mayor Rhonda Haight asked for a motion to approve Michael Richardson as City Treasurer.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

e) Municipal Court Judge

Mayor Rhonda Haight recommended Robert Sneed, who has worked for the city for many years.

Council Member Jack Taylor made the motion.

Council Member William Whaley seconded.

WILLIAM (S) ANGIE (X) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

f) Levy Officer

Mayor Rhonda Haight recommended appointing Christina Mortimer.

Council Member Jack Taylor motioned to approve.

Council Member William Whaley seconded.

WILLIAM (S) ANGIE (X) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

3) Prosecuting Attorney of the Court Appointment

Mayor Rhonda Haight recommended appointing Joseph Hudson.

Council Member Jack Taylor motioned to approve.

Council Member William Whaley seconded.

WILLIAM (S) ANGIE (X) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

4) City Auditor Appointment

Mayor Rhonda Haight recommended to appoint Welch, Walker and Associates.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

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WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

## 5) Downtown Development Authority Appointments

Mayor Haight stated there are openings, one being appointed by the mayor.

Mayor Haight appointed Laura Ray.

Mayor Haight stated the next appointment is a member of the council to serve on the Board.

Council Member Jack Taylor made a motion to appoint Angie Arp.

Council Member William Whaley seconded.

Council Member Angie Arp asked to clarify the term. Mayor Haight stated it would be a four-year term. Council Member Angie Arp requested if the motion could be made for her to serve for one year and for Council Member Christy Kay to serve the three remaining years.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated there is one more position and asked if the council would like to wait until next meeting to appoint the last position.

Council Member Christy Kay made a motion to appoint Andy Bowen.

Council Member Angie Arp seconded.

WILLIAM (X) ANGIE (S) JACK (X) CHRISTY (M) BILL (X)

All in favor.

DDA Appointments: Laura Ray, Andy Bowen, and Council Member Angie Arp for one year and Council Member Christy Kay for the remaining three.

## 6) Planning and Zoning Appointment

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated there is one opening that needs to be filled.

Council Member Jack Taylor made a motion to appoint Brian Higgins.

Council Member Angie Arp seconded.

WILLIAM (X) ANGIE (S) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (NO)

4-1.

## 7) Council Meeting Rules of Procedures and Core Mission Statement

Council Member William Whaley advised he worked with Council Member Angie Arp on putting together a mission statement, a set of core values and have the Roberts rules of orders in their packets to maintain decorum and order during the meetings.

Council Member William Whaley read the core mission statement. (attached)

Council Member William Whaley stated they pledge not to conduct business behind the shield, will be open in everything the council does and will be accountable. Mr. Whaley stated they are here to make sure the city runs efficiently and to be a resource to help employees be economically successful and adhere to the core values and the mission statement.

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Council Member William Whaley moved to approve the rules, the mission statement, and the way we are going to run the meetings.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

8) ETC Service Agreement (tabled from last month)

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated she needed a motion to continue the Service Agreement with ETC.

Council Member Jack Taylor made a motion.

Council Member Bill Bivins seconded.

WILLIAM (X) ANGIE (X) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (S)

All in favor.

9) Water Plant Surveillance System (tabled from last month)

Removed from the agenda due to not having quotes.

10) County Emergency Notification System Change – BH

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated the county is switching from Nixle to Hyper-Reach. Mayor Haight stated we need to adopt the resolution and approve the expenses, City of Blue Ridge contribution being \$1,380.00 per year for five years.

Council Member William Whaley explained this is a notification system that comes to your telephone and is held by the county.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve the resolution and the expense for the five-year contract, annually renewing.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

11) Executive Parking Contract Termination – RH

Removed from the agenda, due to receiving termination letter prior to the meeting. (attached)

12) Parking proceeds allocation-RH

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated the proceeds for the parking and Hotel-Motel have been going to the DDA and advised we will continue to give the Hotel-Motel to them but the proceeds for the parking will now go into the general fund to work on projects in the town.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve.

Council Member Bill Bivins seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (X) CHRISTY (X) BILL (S)

All in favor.

## Purchasing Approvals:

13) Replacement for gutters on Baugh House (tabled from last month) PO#28720

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated the Baugh House is on a Historic Registry.

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Council Member William Whaley moved it approval and which it remain, Baugh house is historic, it's exactly what we said in our mission statement. We want to preserve it, and cost more to put up aesthetically appropriate gutters.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded the motion.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

Approved Andrew's Home Improvement for \$17,296.00.

14) 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Leak Detection Services – BH PO#29804

Mayor Rhonda Haight explained the company is going to be doing leak detection at mountaintops, which is the highest leak area. Mayor Haight advised the company has quoted for four different times but could approve it for eight different times for the leak detection services.

Mayor Haight stated the company will go into Mountain Tops or other areas where we have high water loss but can only do portions. If we become more aggressive, and do the eight times a year, it would double the price, but is in the budget to do so.

Council Member Bill Bivins stated there is approximately 38% of water leakage and approximately 50% of that comes from Mountain Tops, so his suggestion would be to double it. Council Member Angie Arp asked once the leak is found they let us know, and then we replace the lines.

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated the company will let us know exactly how much leakage there is, what the problem is, and then we will send our crew in the replace the lines.

Council Member Bill Bivins motioned to approve doubling.

Council Member William Whaley seconded.

WILLIAM (S) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (M)

Approved to double the original quote of four times a year at \$26,000.00 to eight times a year at \$52,000.00.

15) Lance Trucking – MR PO# 28729

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated this item went over the spending limit for the street department for rip rap and different freight materials.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

Approved in the amount of \$6,512.10.

16) Pipe Inventory for Water Distribution – BH PO# 28721

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated this is for the hothouse creek project and will be awarding the bid right at \$99,000.00. The original project was approximated at \$170,000.00, so the city will be buying the materials for the project to help with the cost.

Mayor Haight stated there are two different quotes, the cheapest one being \$56,000.00, for two different types of piping.

Mayor Rhonda Haight recommended to go with the quote from Core & Main.

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Council Member Jack Taylor made a motion.

Council Member Angie Arp seconded.

WILLIAM (X) ANGIE (S) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

Approved Core & Main in the amount of \$56,322.00

## 17) Parking Kiosk

Mayor Rhonda Haight explained City Clerk Amy Mintz has sent out two emails waiting on quotes for a Kiosk, and the average cost for the one we have been looking at is approximately \$6,500.00. Mayor Haight asked the council to allocate a certain amount to go towards the Kiosk.

Council Member William Whaley stated to give the mayor the authority for \$10,000.00 for the infrastructure, Kiosk and whatever else may be needed, and to pursue and consult to do whatever it takes to make sure that this is done properly, and don't stumble because we have never done this before.

Council Member William Whaley made a motion.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

Approved to allot Mayor Haight \$10,000.00 for kiosk, infrastructure and any other costs that arise.

## 18) SR 60 at Hothouse Creek Water Line Relocation – Added to the agenda **PO# 28719**

Mayor Rhonda Haight stated Carter and Sloope recommended to project be awarded to T. Stanco, Inc. at \$99,000.00 and the materials be at the city's expense.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve the \$99,000.00 recommendation.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

Approved T. Stanco, Inc. at \$99,000.00

## 19) Municode Ordinance – Added to the agenda

First reading of the ordinance. (attached)

Mayor Rhonda Haight explained the city has been working on this code for three years, combining our ordinances, and this will allow us to put a link on our website that will give the council and public access to all ordinances.

**Discussion Agenda Items (Items for discussion only):**

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## Executive Session

Mayor Rhonda Haight asked for a motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel and litigation.

Council Member Jack Taylor made the motion.

Council Member William Whaley seconded.

All in favor.

Entered into executive session at 5:45pm.

Mayor Rhonda Haight asked for a motion to come out of executive session.

Council Member Jack Taylor made the motion.

Council Member William Whaley seconded.

Came out of executive session at 6:36pm.

Attorney Chuck Conerly advised that the city has recently received an anti-litem notice from an Attorney representing a downtown property owner. He stated an anti-litem is not a lawsuit but a notice of the potential to file a lawsuit regarding the stormwater draining in the central business district. Attorney Chuck Conerly presented Resolution NO. BR2022-01 to place a six-month moratorium on the acceptance of land disturbance and building permit applications in the central business district while the issues for the stormwater management and runoff can be addressed.

Council Member William Whaley moved to approve.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

Resolution NO. BR2022-01 passed.

Mayor Rhonda Haight asked for a motion for the City Administrator.

Council Member William Whaley moved to give the mayor the authority to offer the position to Richard Rose, within the parameters that were in the announcement of the position of City Manager.

Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.

WILLIAM (M) ANGIE (X) JACK (S) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

Approved for Mayor Rhonda Haight to offer the City Administrator position to Richard Rose.

Mayor Rhonda Haight advised there are two new employees for the Police Department to approve.

Council Member Jack Taylor made a motion to hire Michael Lutz at the rate of \$20.22 an hour and Brian Wingate at the same rate of \$20.22, also made a motion to make the 4% pay scale across the board.



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**Council Member William Whaley seconded the motion.**

WILLIAM (S) ANGIE (X) JACK (M) CHRISTY (X) BILL (X)

All in favor.

## Adjournment

**Council Member William Whaley made a motion to adjourn.**

**Council Member Jack Taylor seconded.**

All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:43pm.



Mayor, Rhonda Haight

February 15, 2022

Approved



City Clerk, Amy Mintz



(City seal)