

City of Blue Ridge

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

City of Blue Ridge
Special Called Council Meeting Minutes
October 20, 2020
City Hall
480 West First Street

Present: Mayor Donna Whitener

Council Members: Robbie Cornelius,

Nathan Fitts, Rhonda Haight,

Harold Herndon, and Mike Panter

Assistant City Clerk: Chris Mortimer

Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart

1) Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Donna Whitener called the meeting to order.

2) Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

She then asked Council Member Robbie Cornelius to lead with a word of prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

a) Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to approve the August 11, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion carried.

b) Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to approve the September 1, Workshop Meeting Minutes. Council Member Robbie Cornelius seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion carried.

c) Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to approve the September 8, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes. Council Member Robbie Cornelius seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion carried.

4) Approval of Agenda or Motion to Amend Agenda

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to amend the agenda to remove agenda items "Occupational Tax Certificate Ordinance Amendment", "Ada & River Street Land Swap". Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion carried.

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

- Not on the Agenda: The Mayor Donna Whitener asked Mr. Mike Panter if he wanted to speak first? He replied yes. She then replied that's if Kevin does not mind you going in front of him. I forgot you had told me that. Council Member Mike Panter began to discuss that he has been going back and looking at the minutes of the City for the last ten years. He discussed that he has been going back and looking at newspaper articles from the present Council Members and past Council Members. Council Member Mike Panter deliberated how disappointed he is in the operations of the council. He is moving forward the Council needs to educate themselves on their actions.

5) Kevin Panter—Firetruck Purchase

Kevin Panter discussed that the City of Blue Ridge Fire Truck is a 1992 model and needs replaced with a newer one. The City of Blue Ridge Fire Budget is only 15,000 a year and is way too low. He recommends raising the budget to purchase a new truck with a ladder to reach all the tall buildings in the City of Blue Ridge.

6) Joe Webb— Blue Ridge Community Theater 2021 Alcohol Renewal

Joe Webb debated with the Council about his reasons that Blue Ridge Community Theater should not have to pay for Alcohol License for 2021.

7) Cherie-Blue Ridge Turkey Trot

Cherie deliberated why the Blue Ridge Turkey Trot should be allowed to go forward this year. Staggered Race Lines, outside Race, its less than an hour, and everyone wear masks.

8) Cesar Martinez—Monthly Downtown Development Authority and Blue Ridge Business Association Update

Cesar Martinez discussed that the Safe Zone and Light Up Blue Ridge has been Canceled this year due to COVID. The Blue Ridge United Methodist Church and Business owners have organized a drive thru Trick or Treat at the church. He needs Police to direct traffic on Orvin Lance Connector on Halloween night. He mentioned maybe closing Main Street for Thanksgiving weekend and putting picnic tables for customers to order" to go food "and eat.

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

9) Occupational Tax Certificate Ordinance Amendment (Second Reading & Adoption)—MP

ROBBIE (X) MIKE (X) HAROLD (X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to amend the agenda to remove agenda items “Occupational Tax Certificate Ordinance Amendment,” Ada & River Street Land swap “and to add it to Special Called Meeting October 29,2020 Agenda as Action Item. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion carried.

10) Ordinance No.BR2020-13 Special Event Ordinance Vetoed—KL

ROBBIE (X) MIKE (X) HAROLD (X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE

The Mayor Donna Whitener spoke about this Ordinance and the reason she vetoed it is because she thinks line 42 needs fixed to go from 1 people to 25 people like it was before, Council Member Nathan Fitts asked the Mayor if she had read the charter pertaining to vetoing this? The Mayor Donna Whitener answered with yes and she talked to the attorney before she vetoed it. Council Member Nathan Fitts spoke so did he.

The Mayor Donna Whitener asked Council Member Nathan Fitts “what is the reason for the ask?” Council Member Nathan Fitts responded with” I just wanted an answer from you.”

The Mayor Donna Whitener explained to the council they would have to vote to remove ordinance all together or amend what was there. Council Member Rhonda Haight debated 25 people is a high number and 1 person is to little. Council Member Rhonda Haight conversed that 25 people is an event. Council Member Mike Panter uttered that like 25 motorcycles? He suggested that we do not want to stop motorcycles coming to town.

The Mayor Donna Whitener spoke that is a parade. We are talking about 2 different things. We have people that have birthday parties downtown.

Council Member Mike Panter explained that he put the definition of parades in the workbook. Council Member Nathan Fitts asked” Where is it?” The Mayor Donna Whitener explained that is the definition of parade section3 is what I want to change because of birthday parties ,events, and prayer groups which need permits. Council Member Nathan Fitts asked The Mayor Donna Whitener “Again what was your suggestion on this?”

The Mayor Donna Whitener expressed that she wanted to set numbers from 1 person to 25 people in section 3 and take the part out of parade definition: so many cars and so many people and just go back to the generate parade definition. Council Member Mike Panter

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conferred “So this could be a car show?” Council Member Rhonda Haight discussed that a car show depends on the intent of persons. The Mayor Donna Whitener spoke saying that insurance for the park and events would be \$250.00 for birthday parties ,study groups just to be downtown. Council Member Nathan Fitts discussed that he does not want people discouraged from using our parks. Council Member Rhonda Haight desired to table this for next meeting. The Mayor Donna Whitener indicated that she thought you either had to vote against the veto or vote for the veto. Council Member Rhonda Haight asked the mayor if she was asking to override the veto. The Mayor Donna Whitener explained that she did not want them to override the veto because then it would stay as it is. Council Member Nathan Fitts suggested they amend the veto. Council Member Rhonda Haight read what the attorney had wrote for the council options. Council Member Nathan Fitts suggests that they amend the veto. Council Member Rhonda Haight makes a motion to vote for option 2 from the attorney which suggests that if there is no vote to override, then the ordinance could be read again with the edits and voted on in November to satisfy the “two readings rule”. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

11) Blue Ridge Community Theater—RH

ROBBIE(S) MIKE() HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN () ROLL CALL VOTE

Joe Webb debated with the Council about his reasons that Blue Ridge Community Theater should not have to pay for Alcohol License for 2021. Council Member Mike Panter asked Joe Webb did Blue Ridge Community Receive a PPP Loan? Joe Webb said yes, we did. Council Member Mike Panter inquired what did the theater spend it on. Joe Webb clarified that they used it to pay employees of the theater. Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to Waive Alcohol Fee for the Blue Ridge Community Theater for 2021. Council Member Robbie Cornelius seconded the motion. The Council voted 3-2. Motion passed.

12) AirMedCare—RH

ROBBIE(S) MIKE(X) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (X) ROLL CALL VOTE

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to pay for all employees to get AirMedCare. Council Member Robbie Cornelius seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

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13) Special Events—DW

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(X) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion that after today there will be no Special Events in the City of Blue Ridge the rest of the year. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

14) Short Term Disability for All Full-Time Employees —AS

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(M) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (X) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Mike Panter made a motion that all Full Time Employees get Short Term Disability. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

15) Amendment of the Pension Plan—MP

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(M) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (X) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Mike Panter made a motion that the Vesting period of all City Employees Retirement be changed from 10 years to 5 years. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

16) GMEBS Life & Health Program Employer Declaration—DW

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(S) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (X) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept the three plans for employees to choose of the GMEBS Life & Health Program Employer Declaration.
Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

17) Trackside Lane Sewer Rehab Upgrade—DW P.O.28903

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(X) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to approve
C&S Project no: B7970.042 Federal EC LLC Bid. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

18) Spending Limits—NF

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(S) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (X) NATHAN (M) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Nathan Fitts discussed we all need accountability for where the money

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goes. Finance Director Alicia Stewart will send an email of all checks to Mayor and Council Members every other Wednesday to review. If any questions or disapprovals the Mayor and Council Members have until end of business day on Thursday. Council Member Nathan Fitts made a motion to except these procedures. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

19) Sidewalk on Depot Street at Angela Delorme's Office—JS P.O.28904

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(S) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (X) NATHAN (M) ROLL CALL VOTE
Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart discussed that the sidewalk beside Angela Delormes property is in bad shape. The sidewalk needs removed, and he received a quote from Johnson Paving Company to remove the sidewalk and put a load of dirt back and level it off. Council Member Nathan Fitts made a motion to approve Quote NO:6707 from Johnson Paving Company. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed. The Blue Ridge City Council Attorney James Balli will draft up an agreement between property owner and city.

20) Playground Grass Installation —MP (2 bids submitted)

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(M) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (X) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Mike Panter spoke that he is not ready to go forward with the Playground Grass Installation. He motioned to table it for next meeting. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

21) City Park-Tree Removal—MP (2 bids submitted) P.O.28902

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(M) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (S) NATHAN (X) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to approve Bid NO:246125 from James Guthrie for City Park-Tree removal. Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

22) City Park-Concession Stand and Playground—MP (2 bids submitted) P.O.28897

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(M) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (S) NATHAN (X) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to approve Pete Grays quote \$6000.00 which includes removing the Vinyl Siding that is currently on the concession stand and replacing with new Hardi Board Siding. Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to approve \$400.00 additional for 1 coat of paint to Hardi Board Siding. Council Member Rhonda Haight

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seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

23) Council Meetings—RH

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(X) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to have 2 Council Meetings a month with no Workshop Meeting every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

24) Planning Commission Vacancy—NF

ROBBIE() MIKE(M) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (X) NATHAN (M) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Nathan Fitts made a motion to appoint Angie Arp to the Planning Commission Board. Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion. The Council voted 3-2. Motion passed. Council Member Nathan Fitts made a motion to appoint Mary Foegelle to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed. Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to appoint Dana Hunt to The Planning Commission Board. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

25) Pay Increase for All Full-Time Employees—MP & HH

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(M) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (S) NATHAN (X) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to give all Full-Time Employees a Pay Increase of a dollar an hour across the board. Council Member Rhonda Haight explained that this would get all departments up to scale. It is noted that the City Council intended for this change to be in effect the first full pay period of 2021. Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

26) Taxes and Business License (waive the interest & penalties for delinquent accounts that did not receive prior late notice) —RC

ROBBIE(M) MIKE(S) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (X) NATHAN (X) ROLL CALL VOTE
Council Member Robbie Cornelius explained to the Council that she wants to make a motion to not charge penalties for Business License customers that never received a late notice. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

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27) CBD Building Moratorium Over 45 Feet—RH

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(X) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE

Council Member Rhonda Haight expressed that the City of Blue Ridge really needs impact fees set up. Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to make a moratorium building heights limiting them to 45 feet max in the CBD Zoning. The moratorium is good for 120 days from today. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion.

The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

28) Mowing Contract—RH

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(X) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (S) ROLL CALL VOTE

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion for the current Mowing Contract to be updated by the City's Attorney James Bali to include the following:

- Same areas will be mowed; however, the downtown park will be mowed every week.
- The contract will start now with mowing taking place from March 15th through November 15th of 2021. Currently, they will mow through November 15th of 2020.
- Payments will be spread out over a 12-month period. The total cost is \$8,000 a month for the months mowed (as stated above) totaling \$64,000.
- Anything done outside the realm of the contract must be approved by council. This includes tree removal.

Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

29) Trash Dumpster on Robert's Way for 500 Building—RH & MP

ROBBIE(X) MIKE(S) HAROLD(X) RHONDA (M) NATHAN (X) ROLL CALL VOTE

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion for Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart to mail letters to all businesses that they must have daily trash pick up Services. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

30) Levy Officer—MP

ROBBIE() MIKE() HAROLD() RHONDA () NATHAN () ROLL CALL VOTE

Council Member Mike Panter asked the Council since Johnny Scarce is out on FMLA leave who is our Levy Officer? Mayor Donna Whitener answered that it goes by chain of command so its Mike Presswood. No vote was needed on this Action Item.

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Purchasing Approvals:

31) Salt Spreader—RH P.O.28898

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to approve purchase of Salt Spreader from Cherokee Truck Equipment, LLC \$11,458.00. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

32) Add Four-Way Stop on Orvin Lance Blvd—JS P.O.28899

Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart asked the Council if they could purchase a Four-Way Stop on Orvin Lance Blvd. Council Member Nathan Fitts made a motion to add a Four-Way Stop on Orvin Lance Blvd.

Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0.

Motion passed. Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart will advertise in the newspaper of the adding of the Four-Way Stop on Orvin Lance Blvd for two weeks.

33) Carter & Sloope Engineers' Invoices—AS P.O.28905

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to approve payment to C&S Project No: B7970.041 Invoice NO:24662 and C&S Project No.B7970.018 Invoice NO:24659. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

34) Paving & Replace Sidewalks on Mountain Street (from West First to R/R Tracks)—JS P.O.28901

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept quote from Johnson Paving Company QUOTE NO:6527 for the Paving & Replace Sidewalks on Mountain Street (from West First to R/R Tracks) Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

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35) Paving, Widening & Placing Sidewalks on Ada Street (from Mountain Street to Davis Street)—JS 2 Bids

Council Member Rhonda Haight tabled this for next meeting because we need to move the service lines first. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion.

36) Striping Orvin Lance Connector—JS P.O. 28900

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept the estimate from PRO-STRIPE COMPANY. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

37) Striping Orvin Lance Drive (Pro-Stripe Estimate No. 1464)—JS P.O. 28900

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept the estimate from PRO-STRIPE COMPANY. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

38) Striping Collins Avenue—JS P.O. 28900

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept the estimate from PRO-STRIPE COMPANY. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

39) Striping Industrial Blvd—JS P.O. 28900

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept the estimate from PRO-STRIPE COMPANY. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion passed.

40) Bid for A/C Fix for City Hall—JS

Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to table this for next meeting and told Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart to get an inspection of all units in City Hall and to get another quote to replace bad unit. Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion. The Council voted 4-0. Council Member Nathan Fitts left meeting. Motion passed.

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41) Asphalt in Front of Black Sheep—JS P.O. 28906

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept the estimate from Johnson Paving Company INVOICE NO:2941. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 4-0. Motion passed.

42) Retaining walls backfill quotes—RH P.O. 28907

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to accept the estimate from Johnson Paving Company INVOICE NO:6721 & INVOICE NO:6722. Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion. The Council voted 4-0. Motion passed.

Discussion Agenda Items (Items for discussion only):

43) Bathroom Downtown—MP

Council Member Mike Panter explained that we need to fix the problems with the bathrooms downtown and is going to discuss with Cesar Martinez all the options to do so. Council Member Rhonda Haight suggested not to use grants if you can help it because of the time restraints. Council Member Mike Panter asked Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart to get quotes for the project.

44) Davis street by CO-OP – MP

Council Member Mike Panter discussed that we need to be widening it in the future due to high traffic volume.

45) Summit Street-JS

Zoning, Land Development and Project Manager: Jeff Stewart suggested to the council to make Summit Street a one-way street and he is getting quotes for paving it and adding sidewalks to it.

46) Ada & River Street Land Swap—JS

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Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to amend the agenda to remove agenda items "Occupational Tax Certificate Ordinance Amendment", "Ada & River Street Land Swap" and to add it to Special Called Meeting October 29, 2020 Agenda as Action Item. Council Member Nathan Fitts seconded the motion. The Council voted 5-0. Motion carried

47) Speed Limit in Front of Courthouse—RC

Council Member Robbie Cornelius explained to the Council that people are speeding by the courthouse and she believe the speed limit need to be lowered. Council Member Rhonda Haight suggested that we get with the County Commissioner to discuss to fix the problem. Council Member Robbie Cornelius motioned to move this to an action item next meeting.

Executive Session:

48) Personnel and Land Sale/Acquisition

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Personnel and Land Sale/Acquisition.

Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion.

The Council voted 4-0. Motion passed.

Council Member Rhonda Haight made a motion to open the meeting from an executive session.

Council Member Mike Panter seconded the motion.

The Council voted 4-0. Motion passed.

Council Member Robbie Cornelius motioned to hire Christina Mortimer Full-time at per hour with all benefits and insurance starting today.

Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion.

The Council voted 4-0. Motion passed.

Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to give a pay increase of \$1.50 to all park Employees effective immediately.

Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion.

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The Council voted 4-0. Motion passed.

49) Adjournment

Council Member Mike Panter made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Council Member Rhonda Haight seconded the motion.

The Council voted 4-0. Motion passed.

October 20, 2020

Blue Ridge City Council Minutes

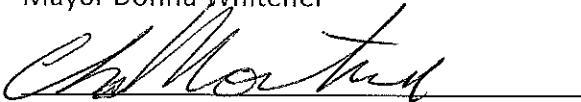
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City Hall
480 West First Street
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Mayor Donna Whitener



Assistant City Clerk Chris Mortimer

12-10-20

Approved