



Minutes
City of Baldwin
Special Called Meeting
June 23rd, 2023

Baldwin Courtroom, 155 Willingham Avenue, Baldwin, GA 30511

Acting Mayor Alice Venter, Council Member Larry Lewallen, Council Member Theron Ayers, Council Member Stephanie Almagno, and Council Member Maarten Venter were all in attendance.

Call Meeting to Order

Acting Mayor Alice Venter called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Public Hearing

FY24 Budget

Acting Mayor Alice Venter opened the public hearing at 6:37 pm.

Acting Mayor Venter read the 2023 State of the City Address read by former Mayor Joe Elam in January, recapping all of the City's accomplishments from the previous year. Venter stated for possible concerned citizens that property taxes are only used to pay for 25% of Baldwin's \$3.6 million operating budget, and that Baldwin's enterprise fund offsets property taxes.

CAO Emily Woodmaster recapped the process of creating this budget with department heads to ensure adequate staffing, sufficient resources and training, and all necessary equipment for Baldwin staff to do their job. All department heads were intentional with their budgets, in terms of what works, what doesn't work, and what they could do without.

Council Member Stephanie Almagno addressed the CAO contract, stating that she had received messages from concerned residents. In her time on Council, there has not been a general fund wage study conducted. Almagno stated that it was time to do the right thing, and that if Council wants Baldwin to be a desirable place to work that easily recruits and retains its employees, it starts with appropriate pay that correlates with the work and responsibility.

Acting Mayor Venter summarized the results of the preliminary wage study for CAO, City Clerk, Finance Director, and Head of Human Resources. The criteria for the cities included in the study were similar population, number of employees, a budget between \$5 million and \$20 million, and services provided. For the CAO position alone without benefits or other incentives, it was found that the average minimum salary was \$85,000, the midpoint \$106,250, and the maximum \$130,000. Woodmaster currently receives \$65,000 salary for the City Clerk position, while doing the work of all four of the above positions. The proposed new salary for the CAO position is \$104,000, a 60% increase in salary. This significant increase is due to Woodmaster declining pay increases for the past three years to ensure all other employees were appropriately paid first.

In Favor: Tom Whitney of 189 Crooked Pine Trail stated that he supported the CAO contract, with it being in alignment with other municipalities, and that it was a good thing for Baldwin.

In Opposition: None.

Acting Mayor Alice Venter closed the public hearing at 7:27 pm.

City Attorney Bubba Samuels recommended giving citizens another opportunity to voice their opinions on the budget at Monday's regularly scheduled meeting, and then holding another special-called meeting on June 30th to vote to approve and adopt the budget.

Old Business

New Business

Executive Session

Announcements


- a. The Piedmont Library System Pop Up Rolling Library will be set up at the Baldwin Farmers' Market from 11 am – 12:00 pm every Friday through the end of July. We encourage all our residents to come and check out or return books. This is available to anyone with a PINES library card. Cards can be issued on site for those that do not currently have one. Additionally, those attending the Pop Up Rolling Library with children will receive food bags courtesy of the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia.
- b. The Baldwin City "Pit"nic is next Saturday, July 1st starting at 5:00 pm. We invite our residents to join us at the Farmers' Market for a free cookout to show our appreciation. Bring your picnic blankets and lawn chairs and make sure you stay for the fireworks finale!

Adjournment

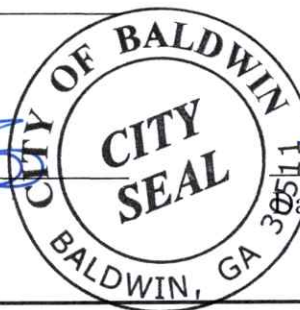
Action: A motion was made by Theron Ayers to adjourn the meeting with a second by Maarten Venter. Motion Carried 4-0 at 7:29 pm.

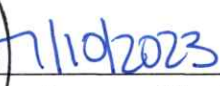


Alice Venter, Acting Mayor



Emily Woodmaster, CAO





Date Approved by Council