



Minutes
City Council Meeting
February 12th, 2024
6:30pm

Baldwin Courtroom, 155 Willingham Avenue, Baldwin, GA 30511

Mayor Stephanie Almagno, Council Member Erik Keith, Council Member Joseph Satterfield, Council Member Kerri Davis, Council Member Maarten Venter, and Council Member Alice Venter were all in attendance.

Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Almagno called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Invocation and Pledge

Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes: Council Meeting 1/29/24 and Work Session 2/6/24.

Action: A motion was made by Joseph Satterfield to approve the consent agenda as presented with a second by Alice Venter. Motion Carried 5-0.

Citizen Comments

Douglas McDonald addressed Council, offering them the opportunity to ask any questions regarding opposition to Vertical Bridge's request for a special use permit and variance. Council Member Joseph Satterfield asked McDonald the distance from the cell tower currently in place on the other side of the airport to the runway, in relation to the distance from the proposed tower. While McDonald did not have the information, he stated he would acquire it for Satterfield.

Mayor Almagno then announced that Vertical Bridge had withdrawn their request for a special use permit and variance for a cell tower. Legal Counsel Bubba Samuels stated that while Vertical Bridge has withdrawn their proposal, they are still looking for viable locations in Baldwin. McDonald thanked Council for the opportunity to address them throughout the process.

Public Hearings

Reports

Finance – Emily Woodmaster

CAO Emily Woodmaster presented a Revenue & Expenditure report from July 1st, 2023 to December 31st, 2023 (attached). Woodmaster stated that all departments are relatively in line with mid-year goals, and the few exceptions have been one-time necessary or emergency costs.

Old Business

1. Consideration/Approval of 1st Reading of Vertical Bridge SUP Ordinance #2024-01136Z

Vertical Bridge withdrew their application and request for a special use permit. No action was taken.

2. Consideration/Approval of 1st Reading of Vertical Bridge Variance Ordinance #2024-01137Z

Vertical Bridge withdrew their application and request for a variance. No action was taken.

3. Consideration/Approval of Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement (Banks Co.)

Woodmaster recapped the work session discussion of the Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement, which would allow the City of Baldwin to utilize our own services and resources to assist other cities in the event of disaster or declared emergency. Council had no further questions or concerns.

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to approve the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement for the City of Baldwin and Banks County as presented with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0.

4. Consideration/Approval of Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement (Habersham Co.)

Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to approve the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement for the City of Baldwin and Habersham County as presented with a second by Erik Keith. Motion Carried 5-0.

New Business

5. Consideration/Approval of Legal Expenses

Woodmaster presented Council a request for a budget amendment for legal expenses. The first request is for three outstanding invoices for legal services were discovered during an audit and need to be accounted for. These funds are currently in the fund balance because these expenses were budgeted last year, but not paid, and the money carried over to the current fiscal year. The other item on the request is for projects outside the regular scope of Baldwin's legal retainer in order to clean up, reorganize, and ensure policy compliance. Woodmaster recommended addressing these projects now and not carrying them into the next fiscal year with the current general fund and enterprise fund balance able to accommodate those projects. The total request is for \$30,000 to be allocated from the general fund balance and the enterprise fund balance.

Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to authorize the legal fees budget amendment request of \$30,000 to be expensed as presented with a second by Erik Keith. Motion Carried 5-0.

6. Consideration/Approval of Public Safety Funds for Fire Truck

Last year, the Council agreed to purchase a fire truck, allocating Public Safety Funds for a portion of the payment at the time. Council also agreed to commit 25% of all Public Safety Funds to a "Fire Truck Fund." This request is for the first

payment made this year, so this request is to reauthorize the expense through Public Safety Funds.

For this year, the anticipated amount needed was \$71,000, but the City will only need to contribute an additional \$58,000 from the Public Safety Funds, as the Fire Truck Fund has the remaining balance. Through the next few fiscal year budgets, those payments for the new fire truck will be built into the budget alongside the Fire Truck Fund.

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to utilize Public Safety Funds in the amount of \$58,133.82 toward the annual Fire Truck payment with a second by Joseph Satterfield. Motion Carried 5-0.

Announcements

- a. The deadline for city property tax payments has been extended to February 16th. Payments can be made at City Hall or online at www.baldwinpayments.com.
- b. Homestead exemption affidavits for property taxes are due April 1st. Please stop by City Hall with your driver's license or other government-issued ID to complete the affidavit.
- c. City Offices will be closed Monday, February 19th, in observance of Presidents' Day.

Executive Session

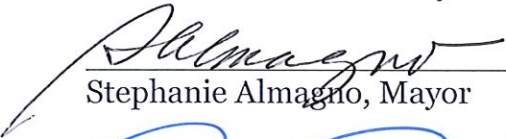
Executive Session for Land Acquisition/Disposal

Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to close the regular session and move into executive session for the purpose of land acquisition and disposal with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0 at 6:57 pm.

Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to reenter regular session from executive session and authorize the execution of the affidavit for an executive session for land acquisition and disposal during which land acquisition and disposal were discussed and no action was taken with a second by Joseph Satterfield. Motion Carried at 7:40 pm.

Adjournment

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to adjourn the meeting with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0 at 7:41 pm.


Stephanie Almagno, Mayor


Erin Gathercoal, City Clerk



2-26-2024
Date Approved by Council