

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE CITY OF OCILLA COUNCIL HELD ON
DECEMBER 16, 2024 AT 5:00 PM IN THE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT
111 NORTH IRWIN AVENUE, OCILLA, GA

Those present for the meeting are as follow:

Melvin D. Harper II	Mayor
Lisa Cook	Mayor Pro Tem
Patrice Manley	Council Member
Lemora Moses	Council Member
Chris Paulk	Council Member
Clae Wynn	Council Member
Donna R. Prather	Clerk

Mayor Melvin Harper II called the meeting to order.

Council Member Patrice Manley gave the invocation.

Approval of the Agenda

Council Member Chris Paulk made a motion to relax the agenda. Council Member Clae Wynn seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Chris Paulk, Council Member Clae Wynn, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, Council Member Patrice Manley, and Council Member Lemora Moses all voted for the motion.

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Council Member Patrice Manley made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting minutes that was held on November 04, 2024. Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Patrice Manley, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, Council Member Chris Paulk, Council Member Clae Wynn, and Council Member Lemora Moses all voted for the motion.

Council Member Patrice Manley made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting minutes that was held on November 21, 2024. Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Patrice Manley, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, Council Member Chris Paulk, Council Member Clae Wynn, and Council Member Lemora Moses all voted for the motion.

Council Member Patrice Manley made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting minutes that was held on November 21, 2024. Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Patrice Manley, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, Council Member Chris Paulk, Council Member Clae Wynn, and Council Member Lemora Moses all voted for the motion.

Old Business: NONE

New Business:

Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule

The council and Mayor discussed changing the Regular Monthly Meeting date to 1st or 3rd Monday due to scheduling conflict for some members on Thursday.

Council Member Clae Wynn made a motion to change the Regular Monthly Meeting to the 3rd Monday of the month. Council Member Lemora Moses seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Clae Wynn, Council Member Lemora Moses, Council Member Chris Paulk, Council Member Patrice Manley, and Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook all voted for the motion.

After further discussion, Council Member Patrice Manley made the motion to recall the vote to change the Regular Monthly Meeting date to the 3rd Monday of the month to change the motion to change the Regular Monthly Meeting date to the 1st Monday of the month. Council Lemora Moses seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Patrice Manley, Council Lemora Moses, Council Member Chris Paulk, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, and Council Member Clae Wynn all voted for the motion.

Employee Gym Membership

Council Member Patrice Manley made a motion to discontinue paying for employee gym membership starting January 2025. Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Patrice Manley, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, Council Member Lemora Moses, and Council Member Clae Wynn all voted for the motion. Council Member Chris Paulk opposed the motion.

Lunch Office Hours

Council Member Chris Paulk asked, how conducive it is to keep the office open during lunch to accommodate those citizens that handle their business doing their lunch break? The Council discussed the possibilities. There was no action taken.

Investigation/City Office

Council Member Chris Paulk made a motion to authorize Chief Ashley Jones to initiate an investigation with the GBI to dispel any wrongdoing in the City Office. Council Member Clae Wynn seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Chris Paulk, Council Member Clae Wynn, Council Member Patrice Manley, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, and Council Member Lemora Moses all voted for the motion.

Holiday Schedule 2025

Council Member Chris Paulk made a motion to approve the 2025 Holiday Schedule as presented. Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Chris Paulk, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, Council Member Lemora Moses, Council Member Patrice Manley, and Council Member Clae Wynn.

Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook asked, “are we planning on moving forward on the tax exemption regarding HB581 with the Board of Education?” Mayor Harper answered, yes.

Department Head Reports

Chief of Police Ashley Jones submitted the monthly report of all monthly activity for the Police Department and Criminal Investigation Division.

Director of Street Director Cornelius Hall submitted a monthly report of all monthly activity for the Street Department. Director Hall also stated he is scheduled to ride with EMA Brandon Flether this week to get GPS correspondence on the roads that were damaged during Hurricane Helene.

Director of Water & Gas Bruce Wilder stated he is working on the billing system. He also found some glitches in the system but I3Vertical is working with him to fix them. Director Wilder performed a trash can count in the City and discovered many citizens are not being billed for the amount of cans they are using.

Fire Chief Will Townson stated the damage sustained to the mobile home at the Fire Department during Hurricane Helene has been repaired. Chief Townson stated the Fire Department has had a good month.

Executive Session

Council Report:

Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook asked Water Director Bruce Hall, how are we going to address the issue of the people that are not receiving a bill in her District? Director Wilder response was everyone has been taken care of. Ms. Cook expressed her concern about the trailers that are parked on Cargile Road. She also asked if the pop-up food services are legal. She was wondering if they are hurting the local businesses.

Council Member Patrice Manley stated her constituents are concerned with the Matador. She said it is an eye soar. It has been there a long time and needs to be torn down. Mayor Harper stated he has spoken with the owner, but he will try another approach.

Ms. Manley wished everyone a Merry Christmas and encouraged everyone to be safe.

Council Member Lemora Moses asked if FEMA is still picking up storm debris? He stated he was asked why is the City spending money when we are supposed to be broke. They were referring to College Hill Park. Mr. Moses thanked everyone from far and near that donated Christmas decorations for College Hill Park. He stated the park is nice. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and encouraged everyone to stay safe.

Council Chris Paulk stated a constituent reached out to him regarding a light that he believes belongs to Georgia Power on Kermit Elliott property. He also thanked the Fire Department for responding to his smoke alarm.

Council Member Clae Wynn wished everyone a Merry Christmas and encouraging everyone to be safe. Mr. Wynn said he is looking forward to the new year. He reminded everyone about night on the time which is this Thursday at 6:00 pm.

Mayor Harper wished everyone a Merry Christmas. He wanted to make it known that Cumbee Park has not been ignored. It was destroyed by Hurricane Helene.

Public Comments

Faron Royals stated that he has recently moved to Ocilla. He also has a business interest here and wanted to know what incentives the City has for new businesses. Mr. Royals mentioned if he could be of service to anyone, he would be available.

Mayor Harper responded yes to Mr. Royal's question and stated he would give him the Industrial Authority information.

Mr. Royal stated he noticed a lot of dilapidated property in this area. He would like to explore the process of enhancing those properties. He stated he is civil minded and he at the Council disposal.

Gwen Clowers stated she has a lawsuit against the City regarding her septic tank and would like to settle the suit without going forward with it. Mayor Harper told Ms. Clower that he will contact City Attorney Warren Mixon regarding the situation.

Council Member Chris Paulk made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Patrice Manley seconded the motion; which passed with Council Member Chris Paulk, Council Member Patrice Manley, Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Cook, Council Member Lemora Moses, and Council Member Clae Wynn all voted for the motion.

Meeting adjourn.

_____ Melvin D. Harper II, Mayor

_____ Donna R. Prather, City Clerk