

TOWN OF BROOKLET
SEPTEMBER 15, 2005
COUNCIL MEETING

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER; MAYOR GROOMS

Members present, Fred Rich, Russell Davis, Randy Newman, Sylvia Prosser, and Attorney Hube. Councilman Wynn was out sick.

2. INVOCATION; Councilman Rich.

3. APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES. Council Woman Prosser noted on page 2 of the minutes a correction should be made. First paragraph, next to the last sentence, Change "at the entrance is she disagrees" to "if she disagrees". With this correction, Council Woman Prosser made a motion to adopt the minutes. Motion seconded by Councilman Rich and passed with all ayes.

4. APPROVAL OF AUGUST FINANCIAL REPORTS.

Councilman Rich presented a review of the statements from the General Fund which shows a negative balance. This is because we are waiting for a check from the Bulloch County SPLOST Fund. He also reviewed the Water Fund Account. Councilman Rich then made a motion to accept the statements as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Davis and passed with all ayes.

5. PUBLIC HEARING # 1 MR. DAN McCORKLE, 519 North Cromley Road requesting a rezone on .45 acres from R-4 to R-2, Single Family Residential, with a minimum lot size of 15,000 sq ft. This was approved by Planning & Zoning on August 9. Mr. McCorkle was asked to present his application to council. He explained there was an existing house and a mobile home on this property which has been torn down and removed. Mr. McCorkle plans to build a Single Family Dwelling of 1,300 sq ft on this lot and he is here to ask council for approval of this request.

Barney Sineath signed up to speak. Mr. Sineath believes this area was originally, accidentally zoned as a mobile home park and the lots were platted as a subdivision. He feels the council should address these errors and he admits the area looks a lot better now. Councilman Rich made a motion to accept P & Z recommendation to rezone the property to R-2. Motion seconded by Council Woman Prosser and passed with all ayes.

PUBLIC HEARING # 2 Mrs. Brenda Hagins, Agent, Tracy Marsh requested a Rezone with a variance on .30 acres at 513 N. Cromley Road from R-4 to R-2 Single family residence with a minimum lot size of 15,000 sq ft., with a variance on the side set backs. Planning and Zoning approved this request on August 9.

Ms. Hagins second request is for property at 511 N. Cromley Rd. for a rezone on the .40 acres from R-4 to R-2 Single Family residence with a minimum lot size of 15,000 sq ft. Planning & Zoning approved this request on August 9.

Mr. Marsh was asked to present his application. This lot has been cleaned up and the house was given to a needy family. The house for this lot will be 1,400 sq ft. Mr. Marsh had a new survey done on the property which shows the lot size meets the 15,000 sq. ft. requirements.

Mr. Sineath signed up to speak and advised council the same comments he made previously apply to this property as well.

Councilman Newman asked which lot he was asking for a variance of 15 ft side yard set backs. This is for lot #10, the smaller lot. Councilman Rich asked about the drain field specifications. Mr. Marsh has been to the Bulloch County Health Dept. and a soil scientist has been and everything has been approved. Councilman Rich made a motion to approve the Rezone and Variance request for 511 and 513 N. Cromley Road as recommended by Planning & Zoning. Motion seconded by Councilman Newman and passed with all ayes.

PUBLIC HEARING #3 TOWN OF BROOKLET. To establish the millage rate or 7.962 for 2005 property taxes. Councilman Newman spoke to Mr. James Deal this week and the reason for the increase in the 2005 net Tax Digest is because of all the new growth and there was no Tax assessment increase this year. Councilman Rich advised the citizens attending the hearing that last year the millage rate was decreased fro 8.40 to 7.692. Property valuation has increased in the past few years, so we were ok doing a rollback on the millage rate at that time. Mr. Sineath asked Mayor Grooms what the bottom line figure was on the tax digest. Mrs. Gay reported the figure for
Net Taxes levied for the 2005 Tax Digest was \$192,800.00
Net Taxes levied for the 2004 Tax Digest was \$175,458.00
Giving a net tax increase of \$ 17,45800

6. RECOGNITION OF GUEST

1. SCOTT HODGIN; Mr. Hodgin is an attorney with Franklin & Taulbee Law Firm and is present on behalf of the Brooklet First Baptist Church. They have a title problem and are looking for a remedy to settle this problem. He presented copies of a plat co the Council members showing Frontier Communications R O W, formerly S & S Railroad. He believes there is a 15 ft strip that was deeded to the church in 1950 by the city. Later the church expanded and built a new wing and a portion of the building and a concrete driveway is on other property, not owned by the church. The church would like to purchase this property or have it conveyed to them so they will have a clear title to the property. A strip of 100 ft. wide was originally owned by the Savannah, Statesboro Railroad and was then transferred to Frontier Communications, who in 1999 deeded it to the Town of Brooklet. Mr. Hodgin was here to try to get a clear title for the church, by paying the Town of Brooklet a fair price for the .237 acres. Another issue is the church had a deed from the City of Brooklet (December 1951) for the 15 ft strip and at the bottom of the warranty deed, a reservation states the city places the property in trust to the church with a restriction the property only be used as a Baptist Ministry and the members of the Baptist Church; subject to the discipline and governing body of the Baptist Church.

The members are building a new church on Highway 80 W. and needs to clear the title so when they find a buyer odds are they will sell to another religious organization. Mr. Hodgin had prepared a quit claim deed which would remove these two problems if council could see fit to grant this request. Mr. Hodgin would like to answer any questions from council. Councilman Newman asked how much he was leaving behind here (showing him on the map). Mr. Hodgin thinks it looks like about 50 feet. Councilman Newman reminded council about the proposed bike path from Statesboro to Brooklet using this area. If we lose half of it, this will restrict the use of the property. Councilman Rich is concerned about us having an Intergovernmental Agreement on the bike path. Councilman Davis suggested we table this and discuss this with our attorney. Attorney Hube had reviewed this paperwork and he also is concerned about the agreement made between the Town and County. Council Woman Prosser has concerns because she knew about the first thing for a long time but the second part about the Railroad Street, she does not see any way we could give that to anybody but the Baptist Church. Councilman Rich feels it would be wise for us to look at the history of ownership of the property going back to 1899 to determine who owns what. Councilman Newman made a motion to table this until next month. Motion seconded by Councilman Davis and passed with all ayes.

2. OMA LEE ROBERSON has concerns about paving Julius Circle.

Mayor Grooms asked Mrs. Roberson to meet with Attorney Hube after the meeting to try to settle her problem. Ms. Roberson asked to speak anyway. She advised council she was asked by the Mayor to come to this meeting because they had cut down a tree that was on her property. She brought a plat but it did not correspond with the surveyed copy we had at City Hall. This was a tree she had not really planned to cut down and she was wondering what the results would be. Mayor Grooms wants her to talk to the attorney.

3. BROOKLET CEMETERY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION.

Mayor Grooms had asked this committee to attend the meeting about expanding the cemetery. Councilman Davis has measured off 20 rows of the cemetery. Twelve rows of twelve plots, four rows of eight plots and four rows of ten. The approximately total number of lots available would be 216. The next thing would be a discussion of the selling price of the lots. Mayor Grooms said this is something we need to discuss tonight. Councilman Davis has checked with Statesboro and Bulloch Memorial Gardens. The price seems to be \$600.00 per plot, but he asked the opinion of the cemetery committee. Billy Tyson said they did not know why they were really here for tonight. Councilman Davis understood they were here to discuss the financial status and the percent the town was receiving from the Cemetery Fund. Councilman Davis would like to see the plots sold at \$600.00 to a total of \$120,000.00 or more, put into a trust fund and draw interest to make the cemetery self sufficient, or put the money in an existing account they have.

The discussion went on concerning the lots and sizes. Mr. Smith will do a survey on the cemetery in a week or so. There was another discussion on why the committee was here but everyone talked at once and I don't know who said what. Councilman Rich then told the citizens the chain link fence and the asphalt street had been removed by city employees, which gave us more spaces for the cemetery. Looking at the continuing cost for maintaince and the returns coming from the Kiwanis stating that certain monies to be used for maintaince. The interest rate is low and so is the annual check from Kiwanis and the maintaince fee goes up. Council Woman Prosser and Councilman Davis will meet with the five members of the cemetery committee to make a decision. Councilman Newman made a motion to have Mr. Smith do a survey on the cemetery property and the city pay for the survey. Motion seconded by Councilman Rich and passed with all ayes.

4. BARNEY SINEATH; In the late evening there is an odor coming from the city septic system. Two years ago, council got a bid for a fence to be put around the septic system area. As of this date, there is no fence. Mayor Grooms says our help is being used for another purpose. Mr. Sineath asked how many members of council are up for re election in November. Councilman Rich and Council Woman Prosser have qualified for their seats.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS;

COUNCILMAN RICH has done some follow up work on securing possible services to help us with our waste water and flood water treatment system. He has contacted Georgia Rural Community Systems Program. A group of engineers that work with State, Federal and City Governments to attempt to secure funds in the form of loans. Councilman Rich intends t make this his first priority for the rest of his term this year. In 1966 the City of Brooklet could have had a waste water treatment plant for \$225,000.00. Estimate cost now would be 30 million dollars. Councilman Rich intends to pursue this from here on. State Wide Engineering has failed us for two years. Now we need to go with the right firm.

COUNCILMAN DAVIS thanked the public works department for doing such a good job on the clean up of the cemetery. He feels we need a ditch bucket on the back hoe. Caterpillar has given quotes on one 48 inch bucket \$1,084.00 and a 54 inch for \$1,047.00. He would like to have some input from council on this. Councilman Rich thinks if we get a scoop to get the dirt out of the ditch, we don't need to get rid of the dirt, it needs to be re distributed and find a way to stabilize the dirt so when water comes out of the culvert is does not wash a hole in the ditch. Councilman Newman feels we should get the bucket by using SPLOST money (streets) to pay for it. Councilman Newman made a motion we order the 54" bucket. Motion seconded by Councilman Rich and passed with all ayes. Councilman Davis thanked everyone and hoped he was not speaking out of line.

COUNCIL WOMAN PROSSER had been to the Keep Bulloch Beautiful meeting and was presented a plaque and they named Brooklet City Hall as the "Property of the month" for September.

COUNCILMAN NEWMAN reports that we have the new Liberty Garden in place, thanks to Keep Bulloch Beautiful for furnishing the plants. The City employees and the Mayor and his wife planted the flowers. Councilman Newman knows of a person who stencils work and makes cement look like real brick. He would like for Mr. Cooper from Southern Landscape Curbing and Re surfacing to do this to the front porch of the City Hall. He has presented a quote of \$400.00 for this job. Councilman Newman made a motion we have this done. Motion seconded by Council Woman Prosser and passed with all ayes.

IAN CATTO thanked council for giving him the opportunity to act as Chief during this transition period. The department continues their participation in events of the S E T E N and plan to attend a meeting on October 1. Councilman Newman had a report on taking applications for Chief job through September 23. At this time he is forming a committee of citizens of the town and business owners to go through applications. There is a Chief school beginning on October 7, which gives us from September 23 to October 7 to have a committee meeting and get back to council. He would like to schedule a called meeting before October 7 with the committee recommendation and finalize this decision.

BILL DECHRISTOPHER has been checking out sign permits. Follow ups have been done on previous letters sent out. Mrs. Coppage at Lee Street Antiques was asked to take down her signs she puts up on the corner of Parker and Lee Streets. She talked to him about erecting a directional sign for the local business to list their names and ect. Mr. DeChristopher thinks the biggest problem would be to secure a place for the sign and find out how much participation there will be. Councilman Newman asked Mr. DeChristopher to take a survey of the business to see how much support we would have.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS; none

9. NEW BUSINESS;

1. Bids on the 2000 Police car. No bids were received. A suggestion was made to put a for sale sign on the car and park it at the Citgo Station.
2. Discussion on the SPLOST Fund. We need a letter to Tom Couch requesting a transfer of the \$75,000 for the Cultural Facility to the Municipal Building Fund. This will enable us to finish paying bills for the New City Hall. All members agreed and the letter will be signed Friday.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Councilman Rich, seconded by Councilman Davis and passed with all ayes.