

**CALLED MEETING  
TOWN OF BROOKLET  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
JUNE 7, 2007**

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by Mayor Grooms. Members Present: Russell Davis, Annette Wilson, Randy Newman, Sylvia Prosser, William Hendrix and Attorney Hugh Hunter.

1. **BIDS ON THE PAVING OF JULIUS CIRCLE.**

Councilman Newman gave a report on the three bids.

Mill Creek Excavating	\$60,490.00
Dan McCorkle	\$63,872.00
Ellis Wood Contracting	\$65,198.00

Comparing Mill Creek quote of 1.5" of asphalt to Ellis Wood quote of 2" of asphalt. Ellis Wood also included striping and signage in his quote. Councilman Newman advised council that we have used Ellis Wood previously and are always pleased with his work. Councilman Newman made a motion to accept the bid from Ellis Wood in the amount of \$65,198.00 (maybe less) for the paving of Julius Circle. Motion second by Councilman Davis and passed with all ayes.

2. **DISCUSSION OF PRIVATIZING GARBAGE SERVICE FOR THE TOWN OF BROOKLET.**

Councilman Davis reported on the information he received from vendors who were asked to send in quotes for a meeting held on March 29, 2007. Following this review, it was decided that some quotes needed to submit additional information. Councilman Davis then asked Attorney Hunter if he had any legal advice this matter. Mr. Hunter advised he had asked Belle if she could send him copies of previous meetings and other information on this subject so he could analyze them. His opinion was that the Town had not decided yet to privatize the garbage service but they are simply looking into the matter to determine the probable cost and other useful information. He feels there was some misapprehensive from the people submitting the information that perhaps that the town had already made the decision and seeking sealed bids. He then asked council if this information was correct. This is what he gathered from the minutes. At this time we do not have a situation where there was an actual authorized invitation to bid and then receiving bids where the town would have an obligation to consider the bids and accept or reject. We simply have useful information to allow the town to determine whether or not to privatize the service. This is his view from a legal standpoint and we do not have a contract and no obligation to enter into a contract at this time. There is no actual requirement legally that the town seeks bids on this kind of situation. Under the Georgia Law,

the only time you need to seek bids is when you have a construction contract of \$100,000.00 or more.

He feels that once a decision is made to change the garbage service, decide on specified criteria of what contract would be obligated to provide or advertise in the newspaper and ask people to submit sealed bids based upon the specs and then make a reasonable decision. At this point and time, the town is trying to determine whether or not to privatize the service.

Councilman Davis advised he may have started out with this in the wrong way. He does not prefer to privatize but this is for other members to accept or decline or have a public meeting to allow the residents to express their opinion. Attorney Hunter advised that a public hearing was not a legal requirement but it may be good to have a public meeting for a discussion. In order for the city to be bound by anything, it has to come from the whole body as an actual vote to actually do something. Once a vote is made and passed, council could authorize a committee to gather information and present the information to council.

Councilman Davis understands that at this point we need to vote to privatize or not to privatize. Mayor Grooms asked Councilman Hendrix if he had any comment about this. Councilman Hendrix advised that what he is hearing is what we need to do now is vote on whether we are, or not going to a private service. If we are we need to start over. Attorney Hunter said there is another way. You legally can consider what has already been submitted and make a decision from what you have or if there has been too much confusion at this point, start over. Nothing is legally binding with the city. Councilman Newman has talked to people at Pooler and Tybee Island about theirs, which is privatized. It works well for them but they expect to increase the rates soon. Three things they advised us to look at is, fuel surcharge, cost of living increase, and tippage fee. He feels like the city tippage fees will go up soon. If we went with a private company we would be better off to leave the price where it is now. Councilman Newman had not decided yet which way would be the best way to go. Brooklet is growing and it will properly take two guys two days to complete the garbage route, we need a new truck. Councilman Davis advised we had been making a profit on garbage for ten or twelve years, since the old garbage truck has been paid off. This profit should be able to purchase a truck. But he will go along with whatever they wanted. Mr. Hendrix had been given a list of expenses and revenues for year ending 2006. All of this is in the financial reports handed out each month. Mayor Grooms asked if it went to private service would we have a contract for 1 or 2 years, and we need to know if we want to go private or not.

Vendors signed up to speak:

Jack Marlette- Sullivan Environmental  
Johnathan King- Live Oak Environmental  
Karye Evans- Southern Disposal

Mayor Grooms advised he was 100% in favor of going to private service. The five council members here have the authority to what decision to make. He asked if they wanted to vote on it tonight so they could go so they could go ahead and

privatize it. Attorney Hunter suggested a committee be appointed to come up with specifications. Offer them a chance to send in a sealed bid, put advertisement in the newspaper, and set a time to open sealed bids reserving the right to reject any and all bids. This is his thought if they want to do it this way. Councilman Newman feels we need to go with the committee suggestion and figure out what information we want. Councilman Newman made a motion to appoint a committee of Russell Davis and Sylvia Prosser to be in charge of this project. Motion seconded by Councilman Hendrix and passed with all ayes.

3. **PUBLIC HEARING ANNUAL BUDGET-2008**

Each councilman member will discuss there projected budget.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIS- SANITATION:**

His budget is about \$3,000.00 less than the one for 2007. he revised the budget by each account.

**COUNCILMAN NEWMAN- STREETS:**

His budget is cut about \$10,000.00 from last budget. All account numbers and amounts were reviewed.

**COUNCILWOMAN WILSON- ADMINISTRATION:**

Her salary amount was increased by 2.50 and she did a review of accounts and amounts. Councilman Wilson asked about a discussion of hiring a city manager and asked Mayor Grooms about some figures. Mayor Grooms advised that Mr. Wood (City Manager for Statesboro) had provided him with a print out from Georgia Department of Community Affairs on a wage and salary survey of city manager's salaries. Mr. Wood also advised that hiring a city manager would change the form of government through a charter to Council/Manager. Ms. Wilson feels the budget has enough to allow for the salary because it would not go in to place until the first part of next year. It seems everybody is in agreement on the search for a city manager. Councilwoman Wilson made a motion to start the process of hiring a city manager beginning in 2008 and include this salary budget. Motion second by Councilman Newman and passed with all ayes. A Attorney Hunter wanted to mention at this time, if you plan to change the charter, it will have to be done in the next legislative session, which would probably April of 2008. Councilman Newman asked if we could have a city manager start in January 2008. Mr. Hunter will check on this information.

**COUNCILWOMAN PROSSER- WATER FUND:**

Councilwoman Prosser advised council that her budget for fiscal year ending 2008 is \$12,940.00 more than 2007 budget. She reviewed the budget by each account and amount.

**COUNCILMAN HENDRIX- POLICE DEPT:**

Councilman Hendrix reports that his budget was up from last year \$70,754.65. They have hired another full time officer in this budget and taking into

consideration Brenda's salary going to full time. Councilwoman Wilson asked why salary amount is so much more in this budget than last year. Councilman Hendrix advised the salary increase is for an additional full time officer and Brenda going from 30 hours to 40 hours per week and an increase for annual raises of 3.50%. Major Grooms thought it was suppose to be 2.50%. Councilwoman Prosser asked if we had not voted on the annual raise percentage. Councilman Newman thought 3.50%, Sylvia thought 2.50% and all she asks is that everybody gets the same percentage. Councilman Newman noticed there was \$33,000.00 in the 2008 budget for a new vehicle, and asked how many vehicles we have now. Chief Mincey advised they had five. This last new vehicle was included in the 2007 budget and we increased by one officer. When we get the next vehicle we will delete the oldest vehicle, which is a 1999, and the next is a 2000. This budget has been increased by one full salary for the new officer starting at \$22,000.00 for an uncertified officer with an increase after 6 months by 5%. This is the same way we handled the last police officer we hired. After completing 6 months of service and completed the police academy his salary was increased to \$23,100.00. Brenda's salary was not in last years budget, and it also includes the part time officers. At this time Chief Mincey is working on a light duty basis for 12 weeks and he has to have someone cover his shift. Chief Mincey is still coming into the office to do paperwork. Part time officers will have to cover when others take there vacation time.

Councilwoman Wilson asked about Brenda's salary. Chief Mincey advised right now it is based on 30 hours a week and in this budget he is asking council to change 30 hours to a 40 hour full time. Councilwoman Wilson asked if this has been voted on. Chief Mincey is asking Council to do this tonight. Councilman Newman asked Chief Mincey to clarify what exactly her salary is going to be. Chief Mincey advised her salary was going to be \$8.48 per hour, \$17,638.40 annually, plus benefits which is included in personal services accounts. There was a discussion on the number of police officers and salaries, the hiring process of the new employee Brandon Neil and the elimination of other applicants. Mayor Grooms wanted to know if we were working on a 2.50% raise or 3.50%. Councilman Newman made a motion to give a 3.50% increase starting with new budget in July. Councilwoman Prosser asked if we could meet half way following a brief discussion and Councilman Newman stated he still stands with his motion. Major Grooms asked for a second. Councilman Hendrix seconded the motion on 3.50%. The motion passed with three ayes and two no's. Councilwoman Prosser and Wilson voted No. Mayor Grooms mentioned the problems we had last year with the amounts of Christmas Bonus. We need to come to a realistic figure and across the board. Everybody gets the same thing requardless, zoning members included. Councilman Davis mentioned \$200.00. Major Grooms advised that he had talked to people in different counties and cities, not a soul gives \$200.00. After all his investigations most he heard was around \$50.00. Councilwoman Prosser would like to do \$100.00 for each full time employee, Part time employees, Happy Christmas. Councilman Newman asked about Planning and zoning which are part time and not employees. Councilman Newman wants to get

a spreadsheet of what everybody pays. Mayor Grooms does not want to do this; we went through all this before.

Councilwoman Prosser made a motion to give all full time employees \$100.00 Christmas bonus, all planning and zoning members \$100.00, and \$25.00 for the part time employees. Motion second by Councilwoman Wilson. Motion did not pass with two ayes, Councilwoman Wilson and Councilwoman Prosser. Mayor Grooms believes this is a sad situation. Councilman Davis made a motion for full time employees and planning and zoning to receive \$100.00. Part time employees \$50.00, motion seconded by Councilwoman Prosser and passed with four ayes. Councilman Newman voted No.

Charles Mallard was interested in the millage rate. He had received his evaluation notice from the county and his house value has increased. His point is when we do roll back, leave it where they roll back to, and whatever last year millage rate is, don't leave it the same, if you do, you have raised his taxes. If we want to raise taxes, tell everybody you are fixing to raise the millage rate. But make sure everybody knows you have raised the millage rate. Mr. Moon added that if they don't do anything, just keep millage rate the same, everybody's taxes will increase about 20%. The budget needs to be considered in accordance with the re-evaluation. The net digest figure for Brooklet comes from James Deal, Bulloch County Tax Commissioner and this figure is not available at this time and may not be ready until August or September. We should adopt the budget by July 1, 2007. Warren Mallard asked for the total bottom line of next year proposed versus this years budget.

**Report:** General Fund 2007 Total budget \$805,000.00  
General Fund 2008 Total budget \$881,894.00  
Water Fund: 2007 Total budget \$173,360.00  
Water Fund: 2008 Total budget \$186,300.00

Attorney Hunter has heard of Sylvania adopting a budget and will do an amendment later on in the year. Brooklet had to do this a couple of years ago. Councilman Newman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, motion seconded by Councilman Davis and passed with all ayes.