



Regular SESSION DRAFT MINUTES
Cochran City Council
Tuesday, July 9, 2024
Regular Meeting @ 7:00

City Auditorium, 102 N Second Street, Cochran, GA 31014

City Council

City Staff

Billy Yeomans, Mayor	Richard Newbern, City Manager
Keith Anderson, Council Member <i>(District 1, Post 1)</i>	Candace Summerall, City Clerk
Gary Ates, Council Member <i>(District 1, Post 2)</i>	Jim Elliott, City Attorney
Carla Coley, Council Member <i>(District 2 Post 1)</i>	
Lonnie Tedders, Council Member <i>(District 2, Post 2)</i>	
Andrew Lemmon, Council Member <i>(District 3, Post 1)</i>	
Shane Savant, Council Member <i>(District 3, Post 2)</i>	

I. Call to Order

Mayor Billy Yeomans called the meeting to order. 6:59 PM

II. Invocation

Randy Thompson led the invocation.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Julie Peche led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Attendance

Present: Mayor Billy Yeomans, Council Members Keith Anderson, Gary Ates, Carla Coley, Andrew Lemmon, Shane Savant, Lonnie Tedders

Also present: City Manager Richard Newbern, City Clerk Candace Summerall, City Attorney Jim Elliott

V. Adopt Agenda/Minutes

1. Motion by Council Member Lemmon, seconded by Council Member Tedders, to adopt the agenda for July 9, 2024 as provided. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Motion by Council Member Coley, seconded by Council Member Tedders, to adopt the minutes of the June 11, 2024 regular session with one correction noted. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Motion by Council Member Savant, seconded by Council Member Lemmon, to adopt the minutes of the June 29, 2024 special called meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Agenda Items

1. Consider amendment to City Charter to allow name change from Mid-State Energy Commission to Mid-State Energy Authority

Mayor Yeomans conducted the second reading of the proposed charter amendment.

Motion by Council Member Tedders, seconded by Council Member Lemmon, to amend the City Charter to allow the name change from Mid-State Energy Commission to Mid-State Energy Authority.

Roll call vote:

Anderson: Yes

Ates: Yes

Coley: Yes

Lemmon: Yes

Savant: Yes

Tedders: Yes

Motion passed 6-0.

2. Consider amending Code of Ordinances to repeal requirement for swearing in and bonding of City Clerk

Motion by Council Member Coley, seconded by Council Member Anderson, to amend the Code of Ordinances to repeal the requirement for swearing in and bonding of the City Clerk. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Consider adoption of Strategic Plan 2024-2026

Item postponed to August 13, 2024 meeting.

4. Consider amending 2024 Holiday Schedule

Motion by Council Member Savant, seconded by Council Member Anderson, to change the Christmas holidays from December 25-26 to December 24-25 for 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Report on property tax collections

City Manager Newbern provided an update on property tax collections. \$6,473,806.96 has been collected so far, with \$282,128.33 outstanding. The collection rate over the past 7 years is 95.8%.

A timeline was presented for upcoming steps in collecting delinquent taxes, including sending levy notices in August and holding a tax sale on October 1.

Mayor discussed the need for a special called meeting to further discuss tax collection issues.

6. Consider request from Chief Trawick to bid out phone services

Motion by Council Member Savant, seconded by Council Member Ates, to approve Chief Trawick's request to bid out phone services to secure more reliable services for the city. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Consider approving form for reserving city facilities

City Clerk Candace Summerall asked for clarification on the implementation of the form, including whether it applies to all city parks and the process for approval.

Council Member Savant clarified that the form needs to be filled out and brought to city council, fire, and police department for approval.

Discussion ensued regarding the scope of the form's application:

- Clarified that the form is primarily intended for the space behind the courthouse.
- Birthday parties in city parks do not require this form.
- The form does not apply to facilities that already have existing reservation processes, such as the community house and the building at Peyton Williams.

Council Member Coley noted that the form was not intended for smaller facilities like pavilions in new parks.

Motion by Council Member Savant, seconded by Council Member Lemmon, to approve the form to be used by persons or civic groups wishing to reserve and use city facilities or properties, specifically for the space behind the courthouse. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Consider amending ordinance regarding liquor licenses

Council member Savant made a motion to amend the ordinance to allow for the issuance of three licenses for the package sale of distilled spirits, increasing from the previous limit of two. Motion seconded by Council member Coley

Discussion ensued regarding the lottery process for license allocation and the qualifications of applicants.

Mayor Yeomans called for a voice vote:

Anderson: Yes

Ates: Yes

Coley: Yes

Lemmon: Yes

Savant: Yes

Tedder: Yes

Motion passed 6-0.

City Attorney Jim Elliott clarified that the third license would by default go to the next eligible applicant from the previous lottery, identified as Andy Ravleker.

VII. City Manager Discussion/Items/Updates

City Manager Newbern provided updates on:

- The adopted FY 2024-2025 budget totaling \$8,755,709
- The Roofs, Windows and Doors program

- Mac Thompson Road resurfacing project
- City Park project bidding
- Development of duplexes on the bypass
- Upcoming events: Caffeinated Connections, Bingo

VIII. Council Discussion/Items

Council Member Anderson: Thanked the city and board for their work. Reminded everyone to stay hydrated in the hot temperatures.

Council Member Ates: Mentioned a correction about district meeting being on Thursday night at 6:30 at the Peyton Williams Building.

Council Member Coley:

- Highlighted the new aviation building for Middle Georgia State University at the airport, noting it will bring more students to Cochran.
- Requested that the City Manager inform council members about major events like structure fires, chases, or shootings in the city.

Council Member Lemmon: No specific comments noted.

Council Member Savant:

- Praised the July 4th event, noting it brought out many people.
- Suggested improving cleanup for next year's fireworks event.
- Announced an upcoming FCA event at First Baptist Church, expected to bring 800-1000 football players, and encouraged volunteering.

Council Member Tedders:

- Mentioned the Fireworks Event and thought there was a good turnout like seeing everyone out and about.

Mayor Yeomans:

- Announced he will be appointing new committees, to be presented at the August meeting.
- Requested council members meet at least once a quarter and include the city manager when meeting with department heads.
- Stated each committee will include three council members (one from each district) and three citizen representatives (one from each district).
- Announced video recording of meetings will resume in August.
- Encouraged residents to check on elderly neighbors during the heat.
- Reminded council to let the clerk know when they want to have a called meeting to discuss taxes.
- Reflected on freedom and faith following the July 4th holiday.

IX. Announcement of Upcoming Meetings and Events

1. Caffeinated Connections: Wednesday, July 12, 2024 at 8:00 AM, upstairs at the courthouse
2. Bingo: Monday, July 15, 2024 at the 4-H Center

3. Dre Day Foundation Back-to-School Event: Thursday, July 27, 2024, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

4. Next Work Session: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at 6:00 PM

5. Next Regular Council Meeting: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at 7:00 PM

6. Mac Thompson Road Project Bid Opening: July 23, 2024

X. Public Comments

Tarious Pitts with the Dre Day Foundation announced an upcoming back-to-school event on July 27th.

XI. Executive Session

Motion by Council Member Gary Ates, seconded by Council Member Lonnie Tedders, to enter executive session to discuss potential litigation. Motion passed unanimously.

Council entered executive session at 8:29 PM.

Motion by Council Member Gary Ates, seconded by Council Member Andrew Lemmon, to exit executive session. Motion passed unanimously.

Council returned to open session at 8:36 PM.

Agenda Item 8 Motion and Vote takes place.

Motion by Council Member Gary Ates, seconded by Council Member Shane Savant, to re-enter executive session to discuss disciplinary action for employee. Motion passed unanimously.

Council re-entered executive session at 8:45 PM.

Motion by Council Member Gary Ates, seconded by Council Member Andrew Lemmon, to exit executive session. Motion passed unanimously.

Council returned to open session at 8:47 PM.

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Council Member Gary Ates, seconded by Council Member Lonnie Tedders, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Billy Yeomans adjourned meeting at 8:47 PM.