

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 1, 2025

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 5:00 PM in the Commission Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following Commissioners were present: Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, Don Bagwell, and Tony Cook. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Mayor Borrow opened the meeting and asked if there were any changes to the agenda. City Manager Donald Anderson said that he has something to make the Commission aware of prior to the meeting. Mr. Anderson said that Larry Whitfield will probably be at the regular meeting tonight to discuss the special event application that they have submitted. This event is the Cornerstone Cornelia Lodge #92 event. Mr. Anderson said that he and city staff feel that this is a horrible idea to close one of the busiest roads in the city (Level Grove) and not to mention it is on Sunday. Commissioner Reed said that Larry had called him about it, and he told them they needed to get the application filled out and turned in. They discussed the need for Police Officers especially if they just put out barricades and someone goes around them. Mr. Anderson said that based on what they have asked for the cost would be \$125.00 with no police officers. If officers are need the pay is \$50.00 per hour and it is a minimum of 2 hours.

The commission reviewed the agenda items. Mr. Anderson stated that there is an opening for the Planning Commission in Ward 3 and that Gwendolyn Wiley had submitted an application. Commissioner Reed and Commissioner Cook stated they both knew her and that she is very smart and just a nice lady. Next the amendment to ordinance 04-25-01 was discussed. Mr. Anderson explained that this will eliminate the restriction of only being able to burn brush on the first weekend of the month. Also, instead of the Fire Department issuing burn permits we will begin using the state online portal. This is what Habersham County uses and after speaking with the Fire Chief and Public Safety Director they both feel this is a good idea. The reason for this is if everyone is burning brush on the same day and any of them gets out of control, we may not have the resources to respond. Commissioner Cook asked if there was a number they could call. Mr. Anderson said yes, they can still call the fire department. They discussed the proposals for a new time clock system. Mr. Anderson stated we received two bids, and he explained the breakdown of what each company had submitted, he said he thinks it is best to go with Tyler Enterprises. Mr. Anderson stated that he met with Audrey Davenport for about two hours today and they want to apply for another Vibrant Communities Grant. He said if we receive it will do another mural on the building called Hill Top which is on MLK.

Commissioner Reed made a motion to exit the workshop and enter executive session, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to exit the executive session, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

No Action Taken!

The workshop adjourned at 5:45

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

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Mayor Borrow gave the invocation and CIO Director Jeremy Dundore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Reed made the motion to Approve the Amended Agenda by adding a sale contract for the purchase of real estate, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 -0

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the March 4th minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

City Manager's Monthly Report for March 2025

We met with a representative from Senator Warnock's Office regarding our funding request for the Rails to Trails Project. We submitted a request for funding for the cost of this project last year and the money was originally placed in the federal budget bill. However, with everything going on in Washington a lot of direct appropriations were taken out of the bill. Our funding was one of these. We are already working on an application for the 2026 budget. We received notice that the state has approved another Supplemental LMIG grant for this year. This means that we will receive an additional \$95,241 in grant funds to be used to pave roads. I am compiling a list of roads to be included on next year's paving list so that I can submit our application for funding. Norfolk Southern has completed the Soul Max Rail Spur Replacement Project. All the sections of track and gravel that they had stored on our property have been removed. This means that Higgins will be able to complete the grading project for the park. The Police Department conducted 305 traffic stops, 49 motor vehicle accidents worked, 8 fight calls, 2 burglaries, 9 shoplifting complaints, and 32 alarms. They responded to a total of 925 calls for the month. The Investigative Division opened 4 new cases, closed 4 cases, and made 1 arrest. The Narcotics Division made 2 arrests and currently has 3 active cases. We distributed 10 car seats and trained 18 care givers. The Building Department issued 8 permits (1 new home permit), reviewed 10 sets of plans, and collected \$2,499 in fees. They completed 34 residential inspections, 16 erosion inspections, and 2 commercial inspections. They issued 2 residential certificates of occupancy and 1 commercial certificate of occupancy. The Municipal Court managed 172 cases in March and collected \$2,344 in fines. The Probation Division has 147 active cases and collected \$9,690 in fines. Probationers completed 120 hours of community service with a value of \$870.00.

Code Enforcement opened 53 new cases, closed 14 cases, and currently has 43 active cases. The Fire Department responded to 121 calls and completed 320 hours of training. The Fire Marshal completed 62 commercial inspections. His report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Public Forum - Larry Whitfield came before the Mayor and Commissioners to discuss the Cornelia Masonic Cornerstone Event Lodge #92. He asked if the Mayor and Commissioners had any questions? Mayor Borrow said just for clarification the event will be April 13th at 3 pm. Mr. Whitfield said yes and that they would like Level Grove Rd to be closed due to the many guests coming and that the Masonic Lodge is very close to the road. Mayor Borrow said that it is probably closer to Hoyt St. that will need to be closed as well. Mr. Whitfield said yes, they would need some barricades there. City Manager Anderson said he would calculate fees, and the Officer is \$50.00 per officer and it's a minimum of 2 hours. Commissioner Reed asked if they had any officer's within the Lodge that could volunteer their time. Mr. Whitfield said he didn't know of any. Mayor Borrow thanked him for coming.

Old Business - None

Public Hearings - None

New Business -

Appointment to the Planning Commission -

We have an opening on the Planning Commission for the Ward 3 representative. We have received an application from Gwendolyn Wiley who lives at 223 Linda Way to fill this opening. This is the unexpired term of John Ballard whose term was set to expire in December 2027. Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to appoint Gwendolyn Wiley for Ward 3 representative on the Planning Commission, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Ordinance # 04-25-01 Amendment to Chapter 24 of the Municipal Code -

Currently we only issue burn permits on the first weekend of the month and the person must call the Fire Department to obtain the permit. This ordinance will do away with restricting burn permits to one weekend per month. It will also require residents to begin using the state website to obtain a permit. This is the same procedure that Habersham County currently uses. By doing this it will allow E911 to know if someone has obtained a permit if they receive a call about someone burning brush. The Fire Chief and our Public Safety Director both feel that by only allowing people to burn brush one weekend per month it creates a safety issue. The reason for this is that if there are multiple fires burning at the same time and several of them get out of hand the Fire Department does not have the resources to handle this. I recommend that you post this ordinance for public comment. Commissioner Reed made a motion to post the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

Proposals for Time Clock System -

We go live with our new human resources software this month. We have received 2 quotes for time clock systems that are compatible with the Tyler software system. The quote for Tyler Technologies system, Enterprise is \$14,595 plus an annual fee of \$6,356. However, this will replace the existing annual fee of \$3,915 so the increase to the annual fee will only be \$2,441. The second quote is from UKG in the amount of \$14,181 plus a setup fee of \$5,000 for a total of \$19,181. The annual service fee will be \$5,850 on top of the \$3,915 that we are already paying Tyler. Staff has reviewed both proposals and recommend that we go with the Enterprise system for \$14,595. Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to go with Tyler Technologies system Enterprise, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Budget Adjustment for Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant -

We have received a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance in the amount of \$3,350 to purchase bullet proof vests for the Police Department. You will need to increase revenue line item 100-0000-33-1500 by \$3,350 and expenditure line item 100-3200-53-1010 by \$3,350 for this purchase. Commissioner Reed made a motion to adjust the Budget, seconded by Commissioner Cook.

Executive Session was held in the workshop. No Action Taken!

Commissioner Cook made a motion for the mayor to sign the sale contract, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Commissioner Reed made a statement, just to be clear we are not sale any property we are purchasing property. Approved 4 - 0

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

STATE OF GEORGIA, COUNTY HABERSHAM

CITY OF CORNELIA, GEORGIA

AFFIDAVIT OF PRESIDING OFFICIAL(S) FOR A CLOSED PUBLIC MEETING

While in Regular Session, the motion was made to enter an Executive Session to discuss certain matters in a closed session.

() To discuss with the council pending and/or potential litigation, settlement claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions, which is exempt from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-2(1).

() A meeting to discuss the purchase, disposal of, or lease of property; authorize the ordering of an appraisal related to the acquisition or disposal of real estate; enter into a contract to purchase, dispose of, or lease property subject to approval in a subsequent public vote; or enter into an option to purchase, dispose of, or lease real estate subject to approval in subsequent public vote, which is excluded from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to Section 50-14-3(b)(1)(C).

() A meeting discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee, which is excluded pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3(b)(2).

() Discussion in Executive Session of Records that are otherwise protected from disclosure under the Open Records Act as pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3- (b)(4).

X The subject matter of the Executive Session of the Regular Session was devoted to matters within the exceptions provided by law.

___ Because of events occurring during the closed session, I am unable to affirm the subject matter of the Executive Session of the Regular Session was devoted to only matters within the exceptions provided by law.

John Borrow, Mayor, City of Cornelia

Sworn to and subscribed before me this April 1, 2025

Notary Public