

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
December 3, 2024

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 5:00 PM in the Cornelia Municipal Building Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following Commissioners were present: Tony Cook, Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, and Don Bagwell. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, Human Resources Director, Lindsay Cannon and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Mayor Borrow opened the meeting and said we have one change to the Agenda. It is a Resolution for Fire Consolidation Feasibility Study. City Manager Anderson stated that it does not obligate us in any way, but it might be helpful to make sure we are providing the best possible service to our citizens. Mayor Borrow explained that we need to go into executive session for personnel because our Human Resources Director needs to leave early. Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to enter executive session for personnel, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Commissioner Reed made a motion to exit the executive session, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Mayor Borrow introduced Natile Crawford, Ms. Crawford stated that she founded Georgia First in 2021 and that it focuses on closing the gap on Healthcare coverage. She reported that 1.2 million Georgians are uninsured, and that Georgia is one of five states that have the highest uninsured population and of that 1.2 million about 300,000 falls within what is known as a coverage gap. This includes 32,000 veterans and their family as well as solo business owners and gig workers. Ms. Crawford stated that about 700,000 people in Georgia receives benefits through a Georgia Access Plan that is a private exchange controlled by the federal government, but the subsidies will expire in 2025. Ms. Crawford said that if congress does not act to extend it another 700,000 will be added and what they are seeing without health care coverage that they often wait until a health issue becomes chronic and ends up in the ER. Which is the most expensive treatment they can receive. Commissioner Reed asked if the governor was on board? Ms. Crawford said that they are meeting with the lieutenant governor in the next couple of weeks. Commissioner Reed said he just thinks if Governor Kemp is not on board, it probably is not going to happen. She said that expanding Medicare coverage would create over 50,000 jobs and that it would help people with mental health problems which in turn would help with the jail population. She spoke for about 45 minutes and the mayor said she did a great job at explaining it. Commissioner Bagwell asked what is the most effective way to send it to legislation? Ms. Crawford said calls and joining the

coalition. Ms. Crawford is urging for the Mayor to sign the resolution. Mayor Borrow invited her to stay if she wanted to but that we did need to go over the Agenda. Mayor Borrow and City Manager Anderson went over the items on the Agenda. Commissioner Reed made a motion to enter executive session for real estate, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Commissioner Griggs made a motion to go out of executive session, seconded by Commissioner Reed. No Action Taken!

The meeting adjourned at 6:02

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 3, 2024

The Cornelia City Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Cornelia Municipal Building Court Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following Commissioners were present: Tony Cook, Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, and Don Bagwell. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Commissioner Cook gave the invocation and Commissioner Griggs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Reed made a motion to approve the amended agenda with one item added, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to approve the November 5th minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

City Manager's Monthly Report: We expect to receive the Notice to Proceed for the new Park and Amphitheater Project from ARC anytime. We have cleared Historic Preservation so Phase I of the project went out for bid on November 27th so that we can award a contract in January. Public Works will begin demolition of the buildings and cleaning up the property as soon as we receive the Notice to Proceed.

I attended a meeting with the county and other municipalities regarding fire service delivery in the county. The county has asked all the municipalities if they are interested in participating in a feasibility study of fire service in the county. Participating in the study will not commit us to any sort of consolidating but it will provide valuable insight into our current operations. We may learn some things that will help us to provide better service in the future.

Part of our Water Withdrawal Permit renewal now requires us to submit an Asset Management Plan to EPD. We worked with our engineers to complete this plan, and it was submitted in November. According to the plan to replace all of our current infrastructure within its 80-year life expectancy the cost will be \$64 million. This means that we need to be spending \$1.6 million per year on infrastructure replacement and upgrades. Currently we meet this requirement because of our good history

with grant funding but we can't depend on grant funds every year so in the future this requirement will affect our ability to use water & sewer revenue to help balance the General Fund.

Higgins Construction has completed both the Pine & Ellis Streets Drainage Projects and the Downtown Crosswalk Project. They have begun working on the Old Level Grove Water Line Project and the FY 23 CDBG Project.

We officially kicked off Christmas in Cornelia with the opening of Christmas in the Park last Thursday and the Annual Downtown Tree Lighting on Friday. About 100 runners took part in the second annual Dashing Through the Lights 5K Friday night. We will host the Christmas Parade on Thursday evening and Christmas in Downtown Cornelia will take place Saturday from 4:00 to 9:00 PM. The Cornelia Hospitality & Tourism Board is once again auctioning off Christmas Trees decorated by local businesses as part of Christmas in Downtown. The online auction began on Friday and will wrap up at 7:00 PM on December 7th. The trees are on display in the building located at 117 Hodges Street. All proceeds from the auction will go to the Downtown Development Authority's Façade Grant Program which is funded only through donations. This report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Public Forum: Blake Foster came before the Mayor and Commissioners once again to ask that they partner with his nonprofit Transform Habersham Inc. Mr. Foster stated that 90% of the homeless come from the City of Cornelia and that there are 60 to 100 people in Habersham. Mr. Foster read a letter from Chief Jonathan Roberts in support of help with the homelessness. Mr. Foster also stated that the city could partner with Jeff Ferguson of Piedmont Metals for housing units, Mr. Ferguson said he would be willing to donate the first unit at a cost of \$20,000. That unit could be placed on a Park that the city would designate to the homeless. Commissioner Bagwell asked if Mr. Foster knew of other communities that have donated a Park for the homeless, he said yes Athens has started one as well as some other communities around Atlanta. Mayor Borrow thanked him for coming.

Old Business:

Resolution #12-24-01, Zoning Designation for 0 Wood Street: City Manager Anderson Stated that the resolution was posted at the November 5TH Commission Meeting to establish a zoning designation of R-1-A 0 Wood Street. The surrounding properties are zoned R-1-A so this is the appropriate designation for the property, no comments have been received for or against the resolution. Commissioner Reed made a motion to approve the Zoning Designation, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

Ordinance # 11-24-01, Annexation Ordinance for 0 Wood Street: City Manager Anderson stated that the ordinance was posted at the November 5th commission meeting to annex.72 acres at 0 Wood Street, this is an unincorporated island meaning all the surrounding properties are in the city limits of Cornelia. No comments for or are against the resolution. Commissioner Reed made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Resolution #12-24-02, Establishing Zoning Designation for 410 Carpenter's Cove: The resolution was posted at the November 5th Commission meeting to establish a zoning designation of highway Business for the property at 410 Carpenter's Cove Lane. The property located next to it zoned HB meaning this is the approximate zoning designation. No comments have been heard for or against the resolution. Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the zoning designation, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. All Approved 4 - 0

Ordinance # 11-24-01, Annexation Ordinance for 410 Carpenter's Cove: The ordinance was posted at the November 5th Commission Meeting to annex 70.32 acres at 410 Carpenters Cove Lane. The property is contiguous to the city limit and will not create an island. City Manager Anderson said that We have no comments for or against. commissioner Reed made a motion to approve the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Griggs Approve 4 - 0

Public Hearings:

None

New Business:

City of Civility Resolution: Mr. Anderson stated that our designation expires at the end of December. The resolution pledges that the City

of Cornelia will practice and promote civility within the governing body as a means of conducting legislative duties and responsibilities. Commissioner Reed made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Commission Dates for 2025: There are no conflicts with the first Tuesday of each month in 2025, so the Commission Dates are: January 7th, February 4th, March 4th, April 1st, May 6th, June 3rd, July 1st, August 5th, September 2nd, October 7th, November 4th, and December 2nd Commissioner Griggs made a motion to adopt the meeting dates, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Appointment for Mayor Pro Tem for 2025: City Manager Anderson explained that due to the rotation Commissioner Reed will serve as Mayor Pro Tem. Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to approve Commissioner Reed as Pro Tem, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Appointments to the Downtown Development Authority: We have three openings on the Downtown Development Authority, Frank Wolf, owner of Elite Recovery to fill the unexpired term of Jamie Keller (expires 12/28) Zack Staggs, owner of BSG Coffee to fill unexpired term of Lindsay Holt (expires 12/25) and Lindsay Dillback, to fill unexpired term of Emily Herrin (expires 12/26). Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to appoint the new members to the Downtown Development Authority, seconded by Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Arbor Day Proclamation This Proclamation declares February 21, 2025, as Arbor Day in Cornelia. Commissioner Reed made a motion to adopt February 21, 2025, as Arbor Day, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Resolution #12-24-03, Fire Consolidation Feasibility Study: Habersham County would like to conduct a feasibility study regarding the possibility of consolidating fire services county wide. Participating in the study does not obligate the city to consolidating. Mr. Anderson said he does think it is a good idea to make sure we are providing our citizens the best possible service. He said we may learn some things that will help our fire department. Commissioner Reed made a motion for the city to the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

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**Executive Session for Personnel and Litigation Held in the Workshop No
Action Taken!**

Commissioner Reed made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by
Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

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.

(x) To discuss with 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

Notary Public