

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
JULY 2, 2024

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, July 2, 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, Mark Reed, and Don Bagwell. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, City Clerk, Debbie Turner, Public Safety Director, Chad Smith, and IT Director, Jeremy Dundore.

GBI Agent, Shilo Crane oversees the Gang Task Force for the Northeast Area. Mr. Crane introduced himself and asked everyone if they thought we had a gang problem in Cornelia? He said that the problem is most people are not educated on what to look for, so we may see gang activity and not know it. There are 71,000 gang members in the state right now. Mr. Crane said that in the last seven years they have seen them expanding into more rural areas because we do not have the law enforcement to deal with it. He explained that the gang activity started in 2016 when he worked a shooting that happened in Stephens County and since then it has increased in Stephens County and Habersham County. He said that in 2023 he saw crimes start in Habersham County, where it used to be a place where they would hide out and do the crimes in Hall and Stephens County. Now it is expanding into Habersham and in Cornelia. He said that he is working an overdose case of a girl that lives in Stephens Co., but she bought her drugs here in Cornelia, it was laced with Fentanyl, and it is an ongoing investigation. Mr. Crane went on to explain the type of gang names, how they are classified as gang members, the symbols that they use and how everything is done through social media. He said the teachers and law enforcement need to be educated on what to look for. Commissioner Bagwell asked if we need to hire more officers, he said yes that he has an office here in our Police Department and does not know how they get everything done. Mr. Crane said all gangs have knowledge books, things they must memorize, meetings, dues that must be paid but the biggest rule is silence. If they talk to law enforcement, they are punished by their own gang. He reported on our first drive by shooting here in Habersham, he arrested two adults, one juvenile and another

juvenile arrest is pending. Mr. Crane said that we need to be educated from the lowest level to the highest and form a community that is not afraid to speak out against these gangs. They will leave if they know you are not afraid of them. Mr. Crane spoke for about 25 minutes and gave a lot of information that is not in the minutes, but this is an overview of some of the information given. Mr. Crane ended with saying he is in complete favor of the Flock Camera System and how it operates.

The mayor went over the agenda, he said that the only thing that is added is a Public Life Safety Award. They went over the two ordinances that were posted from last month. City Manager Anderson said that we have not received any comments for or against on either of the ordinances. They discussed the new business items. Old Level Grove & Alpine Court Water & Sewer Project bid and the Chenocetah Water Tank Rehabilitation Project. City Manager Anderson said that both bids are under budget.

The Meeting adjourned at 5:45

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

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The Cornelia City Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, July 2, 2024, at 6:00 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, Mark Reed, Don Bagwell, Commissioner Griggs was absent. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

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

Commissioner Cook made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 3 - 0

Commissioner Reed made the motion to approve the June 4th minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 3 - 0

City Managers Report - Higgins Construction has begun working on the 2024 Paving Project. They have installed the new sidewalk on Wells Street and the raised island at Main Street and Foreacre Street. They have resurfaced Cox Street and plan to resurface Hoyt Street from Wayside to Old Cleveland next week. They have removed the concrete island on Clarkesville Street in preparation for the signalized crosswalk. The beacons have a 60-day lead time so this project will be completed as soon as the beacons are delivered. We finalized our agreement with GDOT for their portion of the rail crossing project. We have deposited their payment into the General Fund, so all the funding is in place once Norfolk Southern completes the project. The current estimated time for this project is sometime in August. We received our Homeowner's Tax Relief Grant in the amount of \$83,000. This money has been deposited into the General Fund to go towards our property tax proceeds. Annabelle Jackson has completed this year's Fire Hydrant decorating project. The hydrants that were painted are located on Main Street across from Sugartopia, on the corner of Hodges Street, and across from City Hall. This report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Public Safety Life Saving Awards Presentation - Chief Jonathan Roberts presented Life safety Awards to Officer Jackson Cooter, Officer Jonathan Hughes, Firefighter Chandler Austin and Firefighter Kyle Dotson. Chief Roberts stated that these 4 men responded to Walmart about an unresponsive and unconscious infant and due to their actions, the baby is alive and well. Mayor Borrow thanked all of them for their dedication to the job and to the citizens of Cornelia.

Public Forum - No comments were heard.

Old Business -

Ordinance #06-24-01 City Manager explained that this ordinance will make it illegal for anyone not authorized by the City Manager to operate, alter, change, remove, disconnect, connect to, tamper, or interfere with any fire hydrant owned by the city. This ordinance has been posted and we have received no comments for or against it. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 3 - 0

Ordinance #06-24-02, Wastewater Local Limits - The city is required to develop and enforce Wastewater local limits governing the quality and quantity of user discharges to the city's Wastewater Plant. Carter and Sloope has studied our existing local limits in conjunction with our plant operations. Based on the study they recommend that the limits for Total Suspended Solids be reduced from 200 mg/l to 150 mg/l and Phosphorus be reduced from 12 mg/l to 7 mg/l. The ordinance has been posted and we have not received any comments for or against it. Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 3 -0

Public Hearings - None

New Business -

Old Level Grove & Alpine Court Water & Sewer Project - City Manager Anderson said that we received three bids for the project. The low bidder is Higgins Construction in the amount of \$3,481,920.50, the budget for the project is \$4,637,504. The project will be funded with a combination of CDBG funds and GEFA funds. Carter & Sloope has reviewed the bids and recommends that you award the project to Higgins Construction. Commissioner Reed made a motion to award the project to Higgins Construction, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 3 - 0

Chenocetah Water Tank Rehabilitation Project - City Manager Anderson said we received 10 bids for the project which consists of cleaning, sandblasting, and painting the water tank. The low bidder is from Dixie Painting and Sandblasting, Inc. in the amount of \$405,027. The budget for the project is \$500,000. Carter & Sloope has reviewed the bids and is recommending that you award the project to Dixie Painting & Sandblasting, Inc. Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to award the bid to Dixie Painting & Sandblasting, Inc. seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 3 - 0

Commissioner Cook made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 3 - 0

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor