

City of Coolidge
Council Meeting
Official Minutes

June 20, 2023
6:30 P.M.

The City of Coolidge regularly scheduled Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor, Diane H. Causey at 6:30 P.M.

The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were led by Councilmember Adam Gilligan.

Incoming Council Member Freddie Johnson was sworn in by taking the Oath of Office and took his seat at the Council table.

Speaker Appearance: No scheduled Speaker Appearance.

Approve May 9, 2023, Workshop Minutes:

Motion-Leger; Second-M. Johnson; F. Johnson-aye; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye
Unanimously approved.

Approve May 9, 2023, Council Meeting Minutes:

Motion-Leger; Second-M. Johnson; F. Johnson-aye; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye
Unanimously approved.

Approve May 18, 2023, Workshop Minutes:

Motion-Leger; Second-M. Johnson; F. Johnson-aye; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye
Unanimously approved.

Approve Order of Agenda:

Motion-Gilligan; Second-Braswell; F. Johnson-aye; Leger-aye; M. Johnson-aye
Unanimously approved.

Approve Bills to be paid:

Motion-Braswell; Second-Gilligan; F. Johnson-aye; Leger-aye; M. Johnson-aye
Unanimously approved.

City Manager's Report

City Manager, Don Cole gave the City Manager's Report.

Public Works Department:

- Public Works Director resigned in May.
- Position advertised. Position still open. Leaning toward the direction of filling the position from within by providing training.
- Chief Drew Campbell acting as Interim Public Works Director.
- Hired employee for Floater position.

Police Department:

- Police coverage has improved. Chief Campbell has increased his coverage and visibility at the stores at night when our part-time Police Officer is not on duty.
- Still looking to hire another full-time Police Officer.

Annual Audit:

- City Clerk, Lisa Sheffield has submitted her resignation effective August 2, 2023. She is working on preparations for the audit and will work with the auditors in June and July.

Workshop with Mediacom, June 6, 2023:

- Representatives from Mediacom made presentation of proposal to bring high-speed internet to City of Coolidge and made request for approval of a Resolution for Right-of-Way access.
- Suggests the Resolution for Right-of-Way Access be reviewed by City Attorney before Council votes for approval.
 - Recommends there be a stipulation added in the Resolution for the City of Coolidge to have the right to adopt Franchise Fees. Mediacom does not currently pay Franchise Fees for internet services. Suggested City Attorney advise as to whether the City of Coolidge is legally entitled to adopt Franchise Fees for internet services and if that is the case, have the Resolution amended to include that stipulation.

Georgia Municipal Association:

- The City of Coolidge has been designated as a *City of Civility* by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA).
- The Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) will be recognizing the City of Coolidge, along with all others receiving the same designation, at their annual meeting in Savannah, on June 26, 2023. Mr. Cole will not be attending the meeting to receive the award and suggested having the award mailed to City Hall.

Budget:

- Recommends reviewing the Budget quarterly, in agreement with Council.
- City of Coolidge having to utilize Reserve funds to balance the current Budget, which is not a problem but does not need to continue in future years.
- Mr. Cole will focus on learning our Accounting software and working with auditors in order to be able to monitor and make recommendations for Budget changes.

Finance Department

Motion to appoint Assistant City Clerk, Meritta Patillo as Superintendent of Qualifying for Special Election, November 7, 2023-M. Johnson; Second-Leger; F. Johnson-aye; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye

Unanimously approved.

Approve 1st Reading of Special Election Ordinance:

Motion-M. Johnson; Second-Braswell; F. Johnson-aye; Gilligan-aye; Leger-aye

Unanimously approved.

Dispense with 2nd Reading and Adopt Special Election Ordinance:

Motion-Gilligan; Second-F. Johnson; Braswell-aye; Leger-aye; M. Johnson-aye

Unanimously approved.

Approve Resolution to Adopt Thomas County Comprehensive Plan:

Motion-Gilligan; Second-Braswell; F. Johnson-aye; Leger-aye; M. Johnson-aye

Unanimously approved.

Approve Resolution to amend Budget on a quarterly basis:

Motion-M. Johnson; Second-Leger; F. Johnson-aye; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye

Unanimously approved.

Council discussed a Retreat for Council members hosted by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). The Retreat would be only one day and would be held here at the Coolidge Municipal Building. Council discussed cost and possible dates available for scheduling, and after discussion, Council decided to wait to schedule a Retreat until after the beginning of 2024, when all newly elected Council members will be seated and able to attend and it can be included in the Budget for next year.

Councilmember Leger also informed everyone that GMA will also come and do a free Orientation for any new Council members.

All Council members will be provided with a City email address.

Police Department

Chief Campbell gave the Chief's Report.

As acting Public Works Director, Chief Campbell also gave the Public Works Report.

Discuss Dog Nuisances:

Council briefly discussed Dog Nuisances and who to contact. Animal Control currently has no space available to house stray domestic dogs so they will not come pick up stray dogs, but Animal Control will respond to calls regarding vicious or dangerous dogs. Chief Campbell informed everyone that the Coolidge Police Department or the Sheriff Department (if there is no Officer on duty in Coolidge) will also respond to any calls regarding vicious or dangerous dogs, not to pick up the dogs but to ensure everyone is kept safe.

Street Department

No business to discuss.

Water and Wastewater Department

Ratify purchase of 1,000 feet of wire to connect Aerator:

Motion-M. Johnson; Second-F. Johnson; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye; Leger-aye

Unanimously approved.

Ratify Smith Electric Estimate for Well #3 Transformer and associated mechanisms – SPLOST:

Motion-Braswell; Second-F. Johnson; Gilligan-aye; Leger-aye; M. Johnson-aye

Unanimously approved.

Recreation Department

Discuss Playground:

Motion to table-M. Johnson; Second-F. Johnson; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye; Leger-aye
Unanimously approved.

Workshop to discuss Playground will be scheduled for a date to accommodate Council member attendance.

Old Business

Discuss/Approve sound-proofing measures for Council Room – rugs, padding, plants:

Motion to purchase rugs/padding-Braswell; Second-F. Johnson; Gilligan-aye; Leger-aye; M. Johnson-aye
Unanimously approved.

Discuss Methodist Church:

Workshop to discuss Playground and Methodist Church will be scheduled for a date to accommodate Council member attendance.

Discuss Power Pole to be located at 2058 W. Japonica Avenue:

After discussion by Council, it was decided that City Manager, Don Cole will check into the necessary actions needed to be taken to get this approved and will contact Mrs. Gentry, the property owner.

New Business

Discuss updating Personnel Policy:

City Manager, Don Cole informed Council that this is something he is working on.

At this time, the public was asked to leave the Council Room for Council to go into Executive Session.

Executive Session: Personnel

Motion to Enter Executive Session:

Motion-Leger; Second-F. Johnson; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye; M. Johnson-aye
Unanimously approved.

O.C.G.A. § 50-14-4(b) provides as follows:

When any meeting of an agency is closed to the public pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section, the person presiding over such meeting or, if the agency's policy so provides, each member of the governing body of the agency attending such meeting, shall execute and file with the official minutes of the meeting a notarized affidavit stating under oath that the subject matter of the meeting, or the closed portion thereof, was devoted to matters within the exception by law and identifying the specific relevant exception.

The subject matter of said meeting, or the closed portion thereof, was devoted to matters within exceptions to public disclosure provided by law. Those specific relevant exceptions are identified as follows. The only matter(s) considered or discussed during the closed portion or executive session of the meeting is/are:

(F.) Meeting to discuss or deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee as provided in Georgia Code section 50-14-3(b)(2).

Council addressed and discussed the relevant subject matter.

Motion to Exit Executive Session:

Motion-M. Johnson; Second-Gilligan; F. Johnson-aye; Braswell-aye; Leger-aye
Unanimously approved.

Approve City Manager recommendations for Chief Drew Campbell:

- Increase hourly rate from \$18.00 per hour to \$22.00 per hour.
- Time and a half for up to 10 hours per week over 40 hours.
- Compensation time at 1 ½ hours earned per hour worked over 50 hours per week.
- Allowance to take Patrol Car home.

Motion to approve City Manager recommendation in its entirety-Gilligan; Second-F. Johnson;
Braswell-aye; Leger-nay; M. Johnson-nay
Motion fails.

Motion to approve recommendations 1-3, but not approve the Allowance to take Patrol Car home-
Leger; Second-M. Johnson

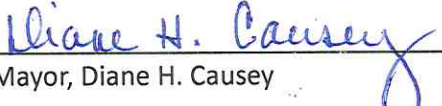
Council discussed options and finally, Councilmember Leger compromised and said she would approve all 4 recommendations only if the stipulation was added that the take-home Patrol Car allowance would be for a 60-day trial period to evaluate cost vs. benefit and then be brought back to Council at the August Council meeting.

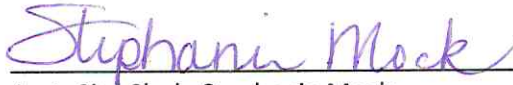
Motion to approve 1-4 recommendations with addition of 60-day trial period to be added to
#4-Leger; Second-Gilligan; F. Johnson-aye; Braswell-aye; M. Johnson-nay
Motion approved by majority vote.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn:

Motion-M. Johnson; Second-F. Johnson; Gilligan-aye; Braswell-aye; Leger-aye
Unanimously approved.


Mayor, Diane H. Causey


Asst. City Clerk, Stephanie Mock

Present

Councilmember F. Johnson
Councilmember Gilligan
Councilmember Braswell
Councilmember Leger
Councilmember M. Johnson

Absent