



Minutes
City Council Meeting
March 11th, 2024
6:30pm

Baldwin Courtroom, 155 Willingham Avenue, Baldwin, GA 30511

Mayor Stephanie Almagno, Council Member Erik Keith, Council Member Joseph Satterfield, Council Member Kerri Davis, Council Member Maarten Venter, and Council Member Alice Venter were all in attendance.

Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Stephanie Almagno called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Invocation and Pledge

Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes: Council Meeting 2/26/24, Work Session 3/5/24, and Special Called Meeting 3/5/24.

Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to approve the consent agenda as presented with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0.

Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to amend the agenda to change Executive Session for Personnel to Executive Session for Land Acquisition and Disposal with a second by Joseph Satterfield. Motion Carried 5-0.

Public Comments

Lec Overacker of 175 Moss Mill Drive addressed the Council regarding frequent water issues at his home and his neighbors' homes for many years. He said that Banks County had previously expressed a desire to buy the water line causing the issues from Baldwin, but the Council at the time had denied purchase. Overaker then stated he had recently spoken with Banks County Commissioners, who are still interested in buying the water line. Council agreed that selling the water line to the County would require multiple in-depth conversations, but that they were willing to speak to Banks County and would actively begin working to solve the problem.

Public Hearings

Reports

Old Business

1. Consideration/Approval of 2nd Reading of Baldwin Court Apartments Variance Ordinance [#2024-02139Z](#)

Woodmaster recapped the variance request from Baldwin Court Apartments previously discussed at the February 26th council meeting and March 5th work session. Council Member Maarten Venter asked if there were any concerns from City Staff. Woodmaster shared the one comment made by Police Chief Chris

Jones that an additional 10 units would be a population increase accompanying the already expected growth, and that Police Department staffing will likely need to increase.

Council had no additional comments or questions regarding the variance.

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to approve the second reading of the Baldwin Court Apartments Variance Ordinance #2024-02139Z as presented with a second by Joseph Satterfield. Motion Carried 5-0.

2. Consideration/Approval of Downtown City Park Power Installation

Woodmaster recapped the request for power installation at Downtown City Park presented at the March 5th work session, stating that power would be an asset for City events and citizens who utilize the park. Funding will come from SPLOST VI if Council unrestricts funds previously assigned to a FEMA grant match for a firetruck, which Council later decided to not apply for the grant. Previously at the March work session, it was estimated that presently available funds would be \$1,400 short to complete the full \$31,800 for power installation, but the shortage is actually only \$400 (see attached SPLOST VI breakdown).

Council had no additional questions or concerns.

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to unrestrict the SPLOST VI funds previously restricted by Council for the FEMA grant match for a fire truck, in the amount \$34,865 with a second by Erik Keith. Motion Carried 5-0.

Action: A motion was made by Joseph Satterfield to approve the commitment of SPLOST VI funds to the power installation at Downtown City Park in the amount of \$31,800 as presented with a second by Alice Venter. Motion Carried 5-0.

New Business

3. Consideration/Approval of Nepotism Policy Amendment

Woodmaster presented two options for Council's consideration: an individual policy waiver for Firefighter John Wall (son of Firefighter Griggs Wall) and a nepotism policy amendment. With the nature of this work, it's difficult to find experienced firefighters with the required certifications. The City's current nepotism policy allows Council to waive with a critical need, which is relevant to the Fire Department and certifications of potential employees.

The proposed policy amendment is for the nepotism policy to remain that family members of employees providing services or control city-wide (Human Resource Office, City Clerk's Office, Finance Department, etc.) are not allowed to work for the City of Baldwin. However, relatives of employees who are classified as non-civilian (fire, police, and water treatment) are allowed to work within the same department, with required approval from the Department Head and CAO and a

formal chain-of-command procedure documented. A job opening for the Fire Department was posted for three weeks, and of the three applicants, John Wall was the only applicant certified and ready to begin work immediately. Woodmaster stated that the Fire Department Heads were in agreement with either granting the individual waiver or amending the policy.

Council was in consensus to approve the policy amendment.

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to approve the nepotism policy amendment as presented with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0.

Announcements were given before entering Executive Session.

Announcements

- a. Homestead exemption affidavits for city property taxes are due April 1st. Please stop by City Hall with your driver's license or other government-issued ID to complete the affidavit.
- b. Join us for the 25th Baldwin Clean Up Day on Saturday, April 20th from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm at the Baldwin Farmers' Market! Celebrate Earth Day by cleaning up Baldwin roads and planting a tree. Free T-shirt and lunch provided for pre-registered participants. Register with your T-shirt sizes at baldwinevents@cityofbaldwin.org by April 5th!

Executive Session

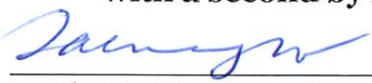
Executive Session for Land Acquisition or Disposal

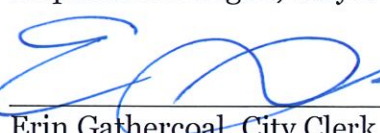
Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to close the regular session and move into executive session for land acquisition or disposal with a second by Joseph Satterfield. Motion Carried 5-0 at 7:05 pm.

Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to reenter the regular session from executive session and authorize the execution of the affidavit for an executive session for land acquisition and disposal during which land acquisition and disposal was discussed and no action was taken with a second by Erik Keith. Motion Carried 5-0 at 7:50 pm.

Adjournment

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to adjourn the meeting with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0 at 7:50 pm.


Stephanie Almagro, Mayor


Erin Gathercoal, City Clerk

3/25/24
Date Approved by Council

