



**Minutes**  
City Council Meeting  
March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
6:30pm

Baldwin Courtroom, 155 Willingham Avenue, Baldwin, GA 30511

---

Acting Mayor Alice Venter, Council Member Larry Lewallen, Council Member Theron Ayers, Council Member Stephanie Almagno, and Council Member Maarten Venter were all in attendance.

**Call Meeting to Order**

*Acting Mayor Alice Venter called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.*

**Invocation and Pledge**

**Consent Agenda**

- a. Approval of Minutes: Council Meeting 3/13/23
- b. Revenue Recognition of Donation to K-9 Unit - \$100.00
- c. Revenue Recognition for Sale of Surplus Patrol Vehicles – \$22,284

**Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to approve the consent agenda as presented with a second by Theron Ayers. Motion Carried 4-0.**

**Citizen Comment**

Jack Sharpshair of 1100 Chandler Heights addressed Council with his reservations about adding the K9 Unit to Baldwin Police Department.

**Public Hearings**

**Reports**

Police Department

Police Chief Chris Jones presented a report of updates from the Police Department and GCIC, including successes, concerns, and future goals (see attached report).

**Old Business**

1. Consideration/Approval of Habersham County Animal Control IGA  
CAO Emily Woodmaster presented Council with an IGA with Habersham County to reestablish animal control services from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Animal control services were canceled in the previous budget cycle, and with the 60-day cancellation notice, the City has not had services since November 2022. This IGA would secure animal control services for both Habersham and Banks County Baldwin residents for the remainder of FY23. To reestablish the service, Woodmaster recommended using \$4,200 from the General Fund Balance as this was not an anticipated expense. Woodmaster and Acting Mayor Venter are in ongoing discussions with the County to resolve the issue of double taxation with animal control and are hoping to reach a solution in time for the new budget cycle.

**Action: A motion was made by Stephanie Almagno to approve the Habersham County Animal Control IGA as presented with a cost not to exceed \$4,200 and to be expensed from the General Fund Balance with a second by Maarten Venter. Motion Carried 4-0.**

### ***New Business***

#### 2. Consideration/Approval of FD Vehicle Maintenance Request

Woodmaster met with department heads several weeks ago to discuss budgets and the remaining fiscal year line items. The Fire Department has several unexpected expenses in the Vehicle Maintenance line item. Council is being presented with two considerations: first is to allocate \$25,000 from General Fund Balance to Vehicle Maintenance, and second is to approve the expense request for \$5,600.

Fire Chief Joe Roy summarized the largest and unexpected expenses the Fire Department has had for multiple apparatuses since July 2022, as well as the increase in fuel costs.

**Action: A motion was made by Stephanie Almagno to increase the Fire Department's Vehicle Maintenance Line Item by \$25,000 from the General Fund Balance Line Item as presented with a second by Theron Ayers. Motion Carried 4-0.**

**Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to approve the Fire Department Vehicle Maintenance Request as presented with a cost not to exceed \$5,600 and to be expensed from Vehicle Maintenance budget with a second by Larry Lewallen. Motion Carried 4-0.**

#### 3. Consideration/Approval of FD Vehicle Gas Request

**Action: A motion was made by Larry Lewallen to approve the Fire Department Vehicle Gas Request as presented with a cost not to exceed \$7,000 and to be expensed from the General Fund Balance with a second by Stephanie Almagno. Motion Carried 4-0.**

#### 4. Consideration/Approval of General Fund Wage Study

Woodmaster presented a letter from Fletcher Holliday of EMI, proposing a General Fund Service wage study to be completed for no more than \$7,500. A wage study for the Enterprise Fund Services just over a year ago and was used to establish a salary scale for each position, which has been well-received by department heads and employees. The General Fund Services study would cover Elected Officials, City Hall staff, the Fire Department, and the Police Department, including Court and GCIC. Woodmaster recommended taking the necessary funds from the CAO's travel and training budget that was allocated for this year.

Holliday estimated it would take three to four months to complete the study in its entirety. The study will compare Baldwin to neighboring cities with similarities in population, services, median income, etc.

**Action: A motion was made by Stephanie Almagno to authorize EMI to complete a wage study of General Fund services with a cost not to exceed \$7,500 and to be expensed from the General Fund Budget as presented with a second from Maarten Venter. Motion Carried 4-0.**

5. Consideration/Approval of Water Treatment Plant Expense

Holliday presented a request for funds to replace the anthracite in the Water Treatment Plant multimedia filters. Each filter is taken out of service and inspected annually, and the replacement is part of the regular maintenance process. The anthracite was last replaced approximately seven years ago. The cost to replace the media in both filters would be \$24,400 and expensed from the Enterprise Fund Balance. Depending on how soon the anthracite can be delivered, the project should be completed before June of this year.

**Action: A motion was made by Theron Ayers to approve the Water Treatment Plant Expense as presented with a cost not to exceed \$25,000 and to be expensed from the Enterprise Fund Balance with a second by Stephanie Almagno. Motion carried 4-0.**

6. Consideration/Approval of Light Street Water Tank Expense

The Light Street Water Tank project includes the new water tank, the new booster pump station, and the water line extension. In 2021, it was projected that the City had to allocate \$135,642 to the project along with GEFA funding and the ARC grant. Since the project is now complete and the tank is operational, the actual amount that the City needs to allocate is \$168,446. The total project cost has decreased from what was bid on, and only the City's allocated portion of funding is increasing.

**Action: A motion was made by Stephanie Almagno to approve the Light Street Water Tank Expense as presented with a cost not to exceed \$33,000 and to be expensed from System Connection Fees with a second by Theron Ayers. Motion Carried 4-0.**

***Executive Session***

Personnel  
Land Acquisition/Disposal  
Potential Litigation

**Action: A motion was made by Theron Ayers to close the regular session and move into an executive session for the purpose of personnel, land acquisition/disposal, and potential litigation with a second by Maarten Venter. Motion Carried at 7:43 pm.**

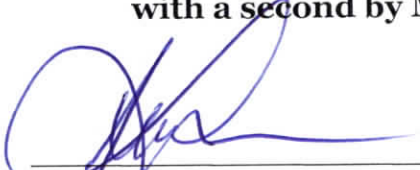
**Action: A motion was made by Stephanie Almagno to re-enter the regular session from executive session where personnel, land acquisition/disposal, and potential litigation and no decisions were made with a second by Larry Lewallen. Motion Carried at 8:51 pm.**

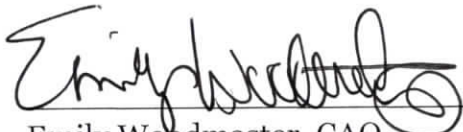
**Announcements**

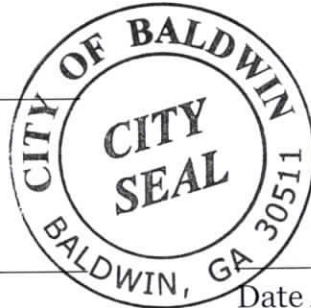
- a. The City Council Spring Retreat will be April 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm at 202 Luthi Road, Alto, GA 30510.
- b. Baldwin Clean Up Day is Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm! Join us at the Baldwin Farmers' Market at 110 Airport Road and celebrate Earth Day by cleaning up Baldwin roads and planting a tree. Free T-shirt and lunch provided for pre-registered participants. Sign up with your T-shirt sizes at [baldwinevents@cityofbaldwin.org](mailto:baldwinevents@cityofbaldwin.org) by April 7<sup>th</sup>!
- c. The City of Baldwin will be hosting a Town Hall Meeting on May 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 pm at Life Church. We invite citizens to come ask questions, meet department heads, and discuss the future of Baldwin.
- d. There will be a Special Called Meeting on Thursday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at the Baldwin City Hall Community Room at 4:15 pm.

**Adjournment**

**Action: A motion was made by Theron Ayers to adjourn the meeting with a second by Maarten Venter. Motion Carried 4-0 at 8:52 pm.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Alice Venter, Acting Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Emily Woodmaster, CAO



5/15/2023  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved by Council