

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA  
FEBRUARY 25, 2014  
TUESDAY, 10:00 AM  
FELLOWSHIP HALL, 817 SKY VALLEY WAY**

**MINUTES**

Mayor Goodgame called the meeting to order.

Those present: Mayor Goodgame, Council President Larsen, Councilors Carr, Greene, Howard, and Whatley, City Manager Lapeyrouse, Chief Dills, and City Clerk Cantrell.

Bishop Erbeling gave the invocation. Mayor Goodgame led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Goodgame announced that Attorney Austin Perry is attending the meeting in the place of Attorney Dickerson, and he will serve as Parliamentarian.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Council President Larsen made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2014 Regular Meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Whatley, unanimously approved.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Councilor Whatley made a motion to adopt the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved.

**MAYOR'S REMARKS**

Mayor Goodgame said that he had surgery in Birmingham, AL the day after the January meeting. He relayed a story about being able to share about Sky Valley while he was in the hospital. He said that we, the people who live in and own second homes in Sky Valley, are the best type of marketing, word of mouth. He encouraged people to talk about Sky Valley while they are travelling. He asked Laura Gurley to give an update on marketing.

Laura Gurley gave a marketing update. She said the marketing committee began as a POA committee, and she is excited to work on the City's marketing. Ms. Gurley gave a brief update on marketing proposals received. She spoke with different marketing firms about the overall marketing of Sky Valley and what is needed. An entire marketing plan is around \$30,000 so we cannot go full-force with an entire plan, but we can begin with smaller pieces. She explained that a very inexpensive and effective marketing tool is social media. Ms. Gurley, Mayor Goodgame, and City Manager Lapeyrouse attended training on Facebook marketing put on by the Rabun County Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Georgia Municipal Association has a program where it collects projects from local governments and presents them to UGA graduate students for selection. City Manager Lapeyrouse submitted the project to market Sky Valley to baby boomers. We are very pleased that a graduate student selected our project. The final

presentation of the project is in April. The scope of this project includes creating paper materials like brochures and a logo. This is all free.

Ms. Gurley said the Marketing Committee's biggest concern right now is getting the cell tower installed as soon as possible. She said she feels it would be bad marketing to attract people to Sky Valley before we have this service available for everyone. The Club is working on stay and play golf packages and to attract weddings. She said that it is also very important for all of us to make sure guests have a good experience because they share their experiences, not only by word of mouth but also online at sites like tripadvisor.com. The Committee's focus over the next few months will be on name recognition, social media, and billboard locations so we can advertize Sky Valley as a day-trip and weekend destination within a few hours driving distance.

Mayor Goodgame said that we all can be ambassadors for Sky Valley wherever we go. The best marketing will be us sharing information when we travel.

Cell Tower: Mayor Goodgame said the lease should be signed this week for the cell tower lease on the Pearson property off of Bald Mountain Road. The City will move as fast as possible to approve the installation of the tower. FCC approval typically takes six months, but we will do our best to have their approval faster than that.

Lodge: Mayor Goodgame said the Council approved moving forward with nuisance abatement procedures on the old lodge. He has not yet met with Harrison Merrill, but he intends to meet with him this month. Because Mr. Merrill is the largest land owner in the city, he would like for him to be an ally. However, he said he will not delay moving forward with the nuisance abatement if necessary.

City Park: Mayor Goodgame said the Public Works Department started the clean-up yesterday afternoon and will continue to work on the park. We will be replacing the swings and some additional work to make the park more enjoyable for residents and visitors.

Training: Mayor Goodgame said he and Councilor Greene will be attending mandated Newly Elected Officials Training this weekend in Athens. City Manager Lapeyrouse has a City Manager Training Conference in March. He is going to attend the annual GMA Convention in June. He explained that we do not have funding in the budget for all the Council to attend, and that the city will cover the registration fees, but each person will be responsible for their travel expenses.

Snow Storm: Mayor Goodgame thanked all of the city's staff for working during the snow storm, including office staff, public works, and the police department. He said that unfortunately, it was an expensive snow storm causing about four to five thousand dollars of unplanned expenses.

Sewer: Mayor Goodgame said he, Ray Becker, and the Capital Projects Committee will meet soon to discuss options.

Budget: Mayor Goodgame said he is doing his best to spend time in City Hall to become acclimated with how we operate. As a community, we greatly value the services provided. We operate with a limited number of staff who are all multi-tasking and doing their best. We will cut expenses where we can, but we may have to present decisions to the community for services we want and let people decide what they want to pay for. Currently, any unusual expense that comes up has to come out of surplus because our budget is so tight.

#### **COUNCIL REMARKS**

Council Whatley thanked the staff for their response to the snow. He said he represents Sky Valley as Vice-Chairman of the Rabun County Tourism and Development Authority. They have been working with the Wallenda family to recreate Karl Wallenda's famous walk across Tallulah Gorge. Nik Wallenda will recreate the walk in 2015. He also said that Teka who works at the Convention and Visitors Bureau will work with small businesses to set up and teach how to use social media marketing. Councilor Whatley said that some areas of Sky Valley do have cell service, and we need to get out of the habit of saying we don't have any cell service.

Council President Larsen thanked Ms. Gurley for her hard work on taking the big job of marketing for Sky Valley. He said the Club has a new General Manager who wants to get involved. He said he was impressed with the City's response to the snow removal.

Councilor Howard said he wanted to add his "Thank You" to the city for the great response to the snow. He said he has two homes in Sky Valley, and they both receive cell service. The Club has free Wi-Fi available. He said he went to the GMA Annual Convention in Savannah when he was first on Council and it was a great convention and it really helps make contacts.

Councilor Greene said the City did a great job on snow removal. He is looking forward to attending the newly elected officials training this weekend.

Councilor Carr said that she attended the Mayors' Day Conference in January. She said that they spoke about multi-generational communities. She said GMA stressed obtaining bids on insurance every three years and that they recommend changing auditors every three to five years.

#### **CITY MANAGER & DEPARTMENT REPORTS – EXCEPTIONS AND QUESTIONS**

City Manager Lapeyrouse said that we are no longer reading reports at the meeting. We are emailing them and posting them on the city's website. She asked if anyone had questions about the reports. City Manager Lapeyrouse said that the city's Facebook page popularity grew by 32-percent last month.

Mayor Goodgame said that we are circulating the reports prior to the meeting so that everyone can read the reports and ask any questions they may have. He said the financial report is a work in progress, and approval of the audit proposal is on the agenda for approval. One of the

reasons the financial report is in a state of flux is because our current auditor is also a CPA who does personal and business accounting. Because of this he does not begin the audit until April.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- Approval of Mutual Aid Agreement

Mayor Goodgame said that in January, we approved a motion to enter into the Mutual Aid Agreement as soon as it has final approval from the Attorney. Chief Dills gave an update explaining that it will allow us to respond to emergencies in North Carolina that are within the Sky Valley/Scaly Mountain Fire District. We have also agreed to allow Macon County to assist in the city. We are waiting on the maps. Attorney Perry said that there is one phrase in the agreement where it does not agree with NC State Statute. Perry said that came up Friday afternoon, and he anticipates the final agreement will be ready at the next meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Presentation from Sky Valley Club Regarding Geese

Council President Larsen said that every spring, we are inundated with geese and end up with over 80 geese in the summer. They eat the grass on the fairways around the lake and poop several times a day creating a mess and a health concern. He introduced Steve Mason to give a presentation of the geese and how the Club is working to control them.

Steve Mason said that they follow recommendations by Georgia Department of Natural Resources to try and control and reduce the geese population. This includes destroying eggs in the spring. In June, they are allowed a nuisance permit from the DNR that allows them to kill 10 geese. The city does not allow anyone to discharge a firearm in city limits, so they work with the police department to shoot the geese. He requested that the city allow firearms to be discharged in city limits for nuisance purposes like killing the geese. Discussion followed regarding allowing firearms to be discharged in the city and under what purposes. Council President Larsen made a motion to allow the Club to fire firearms for the purpose of killing geese in accordance with the DNR requirements, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Greene. Councilor Whatley said that we should look at the language in the current ordinance and into updating it to possibly include other nuisance animals, like coyotes, as well. Councilor Howard said we should consider who is allowed to discharge firearms. A citizen asked if the geese could be trapped and relocated. Steve Mason replied that DNR can trap them, and they charge \$1,500. Mayor Goodgame recommended postponing this item to the next meeting. Council President Larsen amended his motion to postpone, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

- Appointment of 2014 Committee Members

Mayor Goodgame said Council approved Committees and a Councilmember to serve on each Committee in January. Now, we need to approve the Committee members. All Committee meetings are public and will be announced and noticed just like the Council meetings. The goal of these committees is to encourage and receive community involvement. He said that if anyone wants to serve on a Committee to let him know so they can be added to the Committee. A copy of the 2014 Committees and there members is hereby incorporated by

reference and attached hereto. Councilor Howard made a motion to approve the appointments to the 2014 committees, 2<sup>nd</sup> Council President Larsen, unanimously approved.

- RMA General Services Engineering Agreement

City Manager Lapeyrouse presented the general services agreement from Rindt-McDuff and Associates. She said that we have worked with them for several years, and this agreement covers general engineering services needed. Engineering services for any large projects, such as sewer, is bid individually. Council President Larsen made a motion to approve the general services agreement, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Howard, unanimously approved.

- Election Services

Mayor Goodgame said there has been past discussion of the County conducting the City's elections. He said he recommends we defer this item to the Special Projects Committee. Councilor Whatley made a motion to send this to the committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Council President Larsen. Mayor Goodgame said the Council will need to make a decision by June if we want the County to conduct our elections.

- Approval of Fiscal Year 2013 Audit Proposal

Mayor Goodgame said we received two proposals. The one for \$6,000 is from the firm who has conducted our audit for the last several years. He said we need a faster turn-around time on the audit completion and the audit/internal accounting adjustments. He said he called and spoke with Bates-Carter who agreed to perform the audit for \$8,000 and can begin working on it immediately. He feels this firm is more qualified and will be more helpful and asked for a motion to approve Bates-Carter's audit proposal. Councilor Carr made a motion to approve the proposal from Bates-Carter, 2<sup>nd</sup> Council President Larsen. Councilor Howard asked if we had an obligation to approve the lowest bid, and could we specify when the audit must be completed when we request proposals. City Clerk Cantrell said that we are not obligated to accept the lowest bid, and that Mr. Green, our current auditor, said he cannot begin working on audits until after individual and business taxes are completed in April. Councilor Whatley said that before he votes in favor of it, he wants to see an agreement stating that the actual cost of \$8,000 and that we be notified in advance and agree to any additional work and the rate at which it will be performed. Mayor Goodgame said they are issuing a new proposal for \$8,000 and including an hourly rate for any additional work requested, and asked if we could have an amended motion to include Councilor Whatley's request. The cost of the audit includes the audit itself and working with staff to complete any adjustments. Councilor Carr amended her motion to include that the audit and adjustments be completed for \$8,000 and that any additional work must be pre-approved, 2<sup>nd</sup> Council President Larsen, unanimously approved.

- Licensed Water Operator Agreement

Mayor Goodgame said that at the January meeting, we approved keeping Pat Godwin on as an employee through February as our licensed water operator. Due to Mr. Godwin's health, he is no longer able to work. We have an employee who will be taking the licensing test in March. He presented the agreement to contract with Moody Barrick to serve as an Independent

Contractor as our licensed water system operator. Councilor Howard made a motion to approve, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC FORUM AND GENERAL COMMENTS**

Laure Gurley said to please let her know if you would like to join the Sky Valley POA. She said the welcome back party will be in June at the Dillard House.

Pam Greene asked since Verizon cannot let us use a C.O.W., could they help with people getting the repeaters. Mayor Goodgame said we are working with an independent contractor for installing the tower. He encouraged everyone to contact Verizon directly to encourage them to speed up installation of the tower. Will Gurley said he believes the fastest way for us to get the tower up and working is for everyone to contact their cell service provider to let them know there is a demand for service. He said from the Verizon side, they will prioritize based on the demand for service. Discussion followed about who to call and who to send letters to. Mr. Gurley said to call the customer service line for your provider because they log each call. Mayor Goodgame said that we can give letters to the sub-contractor also who will take them to Verizon. With the calls and letters, hopefully we can speed up the installation. Councilor Whatley said we should consider very simple regulations before approving the tower installation, such as whoever builds it allow competitors to use at a reasonable price, and free access for public safety services. He said that information can be pulled together and presented for approval at the March meeting.

Jan Mason said she and her husband are new residents as of November 2013. She said they chose Sky Valley instead of surrounding areas because of services offered, police, roads, garbage, and because of how nice everyone has been.

Councilor Whatley made a motion to adjourn, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:



Hughel Goodgame, Mayor

Attested:



Mandi Cantrell, City Clerk