



**CITY OF SUMMERVILLE  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
MARCH 14, 2016  
6 PM**



**CALLED TO ORDER:** Mayor Harvey called the meeting to order.

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Harry Harvey gave roll call. Council Members David Ford, Earl H. Parris, Mayor Pro Tem Lloyd "Buddy" Windle, Joe Money, Jr. and Zachary Martin were present. Also present was City Manager Russell Thompson and City Attorney Albert Palmour.

**INVOCATION:** Mayor Harry Harvey gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Council Member Zachary Martin led the pledge of allegiance.

**MEETING AGENDA:** Mayor Harvey asked if there are any changes needed to the meeting agenda.

City Manager Russell Thompson stated that Rick Wyatt is listed on the agenda but needs to reschedule.

Mayor Harvey stated that the agenda lists two appointments to the Library Board but no nominations have been received so the item needs to be postponed until the next meeting; no later than the April meeting. Mayor Harvey explained that the next Library Board Meeting will be held at the end of April.

Council Member David Ford made a motion to approve the meeting agenda with the removal of Rick Wyatt and the Library Board appointments. The motion was seconded by Council Member Joe Money, Jr. and carried unanimously.

**WELCOME:** Mayor Harvey welcomed everyone to the March meeting stating that visitors are appreciated. Mayor Harvey requested that visitors sign in listing their name, address, and reason for attending the meeting. Mayor Harvey stated that visitors will be given an opportunity to address Council now and again at the end of the meeting.

**MAURICE MARTIN – FAIRWAY:** Maurice Martin addressed the Mayor and Council expressing concern about what type facility will be built at the location where the Fairway Recreation Center was located prior to being destroyed by fire in December of 2015. Mr. Martin stated that the community members want to be involved in determining what is built. Mr. Martin stated that there are 150 signatures on his on-line petition asking for a gymnasium. Mr. Martin stated that residents think that having a gym at the Fairway Recreation Center location will provide better safety for area children. Mr. Martin stated that another multipurpose building for meetings is not in the best interest of the community. Mr. Martin stated further that if a multipurpose building is built and has a computer room there are concerns about monitoring use of the computers and repairs. Mr. Martin stated that the library is close by and is available for computer use. Mr. Martin stated that the focus of the building needs to be "the kids" and have community input.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Harvey announced that Frankie Lee of the Recreation Department and Dewayne Teague of the Water Treatment Plant are retiring. Mayor Harvey stated that a retirement reception will be held at the Depot between 2 pm and 4 pm on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

**MAIN STREET:** Susan Locklear reviewed the report submitted to the Mayor and Council concerning Main Street activities from February 1<sup>st</sup> through March 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Locklear provided a tentative 2016 Main Street Event Schedule. A copy of Ms. Locklear's report is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT:** Joey Norton reviewed his report of all Code Enforcement work done from February 1<sup>st</sup> through March 7<sup>th</sup>. Joey stated that there has been \$51,925 in construction done in the city from February 1<sup>st</sup> through March 7<sup>th</sup>. Joey explained that he continues to work on property maintenance issues.

**WATER TREATMENT PLANT:** Janice Galloway reviewed the report she submitted to the Mayor and Council concerning all work performed for the Raccoon Creek Plant, Lowe Spring, what reports have been prepared and or submitted, and distribution statistics. A copy of Janice's report is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

**WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT:** Chris Tuggle reviewed the report he submitted to the Mayor and Council concerning all work performed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. A copy of his report is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

**PUBLIC WORKS/UTILITIES:** Tony Carroll reviewed all work performed by the water, sewer, street, and gas departments as well as how many locates were done, and upcoming 2016 projects. A copy of Tony's report is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

Council Member Earl Parris asked how the automated meter project is going. Tony responded that staff is in the process of cleaning things up with the water side being 95% done and gas 70% complete. Council Member Parris asked if having city staff clean up the project would jeopardize the contract for the work. City Manager Thompson responded that there were two choices; either leave them bad and drag the project out or fix them. Tony interjected that lost revenue is being tracked. Council Member Parris asked if customers are getting correct bills. City Manager Thompson stated that bills were sent out based on manual reads so they are correct.

**RECREATION DEPARTMENT:** Bo Chamlee reviewed his report to the Mayor and Council concerning the Summerville Recreation Department's participation in district and state basketball competition, Summerville hosting the 2016 Dizzy Dean 10-year-old district basketball tournament, and t-ball, baseball, and softball registration. A copy of Bo's report is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

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**POLICE DEPARTMENT:** Police Chief Stan Mosley reviewed the reports he submitted to the Mayor and Council concerning the Summerville Police Department activities, collections, number and category of SPD calls, County State Court collections, and City Probation collection. A copy of Chief Mosley's report is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:** Fire Chief Greg Echols reviewed his report to the Mayor and Council that provides a listing of the total number and category of calls handled by the Summerville Fire Department. Chief Echols also reported that Summerville's Fire and Safety ISO rating has once again been improved. Mayor Harvey expressed congratulations for this achievement that helps citizens with their insurance rates. A copy of Chief Echols' report is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

**CITY MANAGER:** City Manager Russell Thompson reviewed the information provided to the Mayor and Council concerning the financial standing of the city. City Manager Thompson explained that revenue is in excess of expenses; revenue at 1.7 million and expenses 1.1 million. City Manager Thompson explained that even with a warm winter February finished in the black.

City Manager Thompson reported that the RFP for auditing services is due 4/1/16. City Manager Thompson stated that he has asked for seven copies of each proposal. City Manager Thompson explained that copies of the proposals will be provided to Council once they are received.

**PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:** Mayor Harvey asked if anyone had any comments or requests any changes to the minutes of the previous meeting. With no request to amend the minutes, Council Member Earl Parris made a motion to accept and approve the minutes as prepared and presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member David Ford and carried unanimously.

**FIRST READING – FYE 2016 BUDGET AMENDMENTS:** Mayor Harvey stated that this is the first reading of the fiscal year ending 2016 budget amendments noting that the amendments have been properly advertised and made available at city hall. Mayor Harvey asked if there is any discussion or questions concerning the amendments. With no discussion or questions presented, Mayor Harvey read the FYE 2016 Budget Amendment Ordinance. Mayor Harvey stated that the second reading and adoption will be done at a Special Called Meeting set for March 21, 2016 at 6 pm. Council Member David Ford made a motion to accept the first reading of the FYE 2016 Budget Amendment Ordinance and establishing a Special Called Meeting on 3/21/16 at 6 pm. The motion was seconded by Council Member Joe Money, Jr. and carried unanimously.

**FIRST READING - SUPER MAJORITY:** Mayor Harvey stated that there is \$873,892.16 in restricted cash. Mayor Harvey stated further that discussion has been held concerning having a super majority vote to either move or spend funds from the restricted cash fund. Mayor Harvey asked if there is any discussion or comments concerning this item. With no questions or comments, Mayor Harvey gave the first reading of the Super Majority Ordinance for Restricted Cash. After reading the ordinance Mayor Harvey stated that there needs to be a lot of thought concerning how the restricted cash fund is used.

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**FIRST READING – SUPER MAJORITY:** Council Member Earl Parris stated that he thanks the City Manager, Mayor, and Council for getting the city “in the black”. Mayor Harvey suggested that the second reading of the ordinance be done at the 3/21/16 Special Called Meeting. Council Member David Ford made a motion to accept the first reading of the Super Majority Ordinance and schedule the second reading to be done at the 3/21/16 Special Called Meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Zachary Martin and carried unanimously.

**FIRST READING - COUNCIL MEETING TIME CHANGED TO 6 PM:** Mayor Harvey stated that the next item is the ordinance to change the council meeting time from 5 pm to 6 pm. Mayor Harvey asked if there are any questions or discussion concerning this item. With no questions or further discussion, Mayor Harvey read the ordinance to change the time for meetings to 6 pm. Mayor Harvey recommended that the second reading be held at the upcoming Special Called Meeting on 3/21/16. Council Member Earl Parris made a motion to accept and approve the first reading of the ordinance to change the time for Council Meetings to 6 pm and have the second reading of the ordinance at the 3/21/16 Special Called Meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Joe Money, Jr. and carried unanimously.

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:** Mayor Harvey asked City Manager Thompson to provide information concerning the Industrial Development Authority. City Manager Thompson stated that there has been interest in revitalizing the Development Authority of Summerville in order to stimulate business for Summerville’s Industrial Park. City Manager Thompson explained that the last seated board’s term of office has expired so a new board would need to be established. City Manager Thompson explained that the by-laws of the Development Authority stipulate that individuals appointed to this board have to be city residents. City Manager Thompson stated that if Council is interested in moving forward with this then a special meeting could be set. Attorney Palmour interjected that there are three people set for six year terms, two people set for four year terms, and two people set for two year terms. Attorney Palmour explained that Robert McWhorter currently serves as treasurer noting that there is some money in the account. Council Member Earl Parris stated that he would like to look at a date for a (Industrial Development) meeting. Council Member Parris stated further that he wants to have Butch Eleam involved. Attorney Albert Palmour stated that some of the prior members would be prohibited from serving. Attorney Palmour stated further that members of the (Industrial Development) board need to do a better job maintaining active board members. Butch Eleam asked if there were two sets of By-laws for the Industrial Development Authority. Attorney Palmour responded stating that the original set of By-laws set a seven-member board with staggered terms. Butch Eleam stated that he had a hard time getting seven people to participate. Butch stated further that maybe when Street Scape funds are received that program can work with the Industrial Development Authority. Council Member David Ford interjected that he and Mayor Harvey went to Walker County to receive training on Industrial Development.

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**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY CONTINUED:** Mayor Harvey asked if Council is interested in reactivating this board noting that new members would be needed. Council Member David Ford stated that he thinks reactivating the Industrial Development Authority would be a good thing. Council Member Zachary Martin asked what are the board member qualifications. Attorney Palmour responded stating that the person must be a resident of the city and be a tax payer.

Council Member Earl Parris stated that he wanted to thank Butch Eleam for visiting with Senator Mullis and State Representative Eddie Lumpkins. Council Member Parris stated further that he wants to enhance the façade of downtown.

Mayor Harvey stated that appointment candidates for the Industrial Development Authority are not ready at this point noting that a potential meeting for this item could be considered at Monday's meeting.

**STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT:** Mayor Harvey explained that the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement is a document listing the definitions, principles, responsibilities, and limitations of the fire and police departments working together for the safety of our communities. Fire Chief Greg Echols interjected that the City of Summerville has participated in this program since 1970. Mayor Harvey stated that Council is being asked to authorize continuing this arrangement. Council Member David Ford made a motion to authorize Mayor Harvey to sign the Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement. The motion was seconded by Council Member Earl Parris and carried unanimously.

**SMART SPARK ALCOHOL LICENSE:** Mayor Harvey asked City Manager Thompson to provide information concerning the alcohol license application being presented to Council. City Manager Thompson explained that the application is for on-site consumption of beer and wine for Smart Spark, Inc. under the name of Jennifer Kwaterski. Mayor Harvey asked if there are any questions. City Manager Thompson asked Police Chief Mosley if Ms. Kwaterski's background check is clean. Chief Mosley responded that her background check had no violations. City Manager Thompson asked Ms. Kwaterski if they understand that food has to be at least 50% of their sales. Ms. Kwaterski responded that she does understand that. Ms. Kwaterski explained their menu and encouraged people to come visit their establishment. Council Member David Ford made a motion to approve the on-site consumption alcohol license for Ms. Jennifer Kwaterski functioning as Smart Spark, Inc. The motion was seconded by Council Member Joe Money, Jr. and carried unanimously.

**SMART SPARK – SIGN:** Mayor Harvey stated that Council is being asked to consider approving a sign for Smart Spark that is in the downtown historic district. Mayor Harvey asked Joey Norton to provide information about the request.

Joey Norton reported that Smart Spark has submitted approval for a wall sign to be mounted on the front façade. Joey stated that the size of the sign is within the guidelines of the ordinance. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. asked when the sign ordinance changed to allow signs to come out over the sidewalk. Joey explained that businesses can still have that type sign.

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**SMART SPARK – SIGN CONTINUED:** Joey explained that most businesses do not use that type sign due to cost and each side of the sign is added together for the total allowable signage so the sign would have to be half the size allowed for a wall mounted sign. Council Member Earl Parris stated that façade grants are something that needs to be discussed.

Council Member David Ford made a motion to approve the sign application for Smart Spark. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lloyd "Buddy" Windle and carried unanimously.

**VARIANCE – ALRED STREET:** Mayor Harvey stated that the next item is a variance request by Carrie Wooten. Mayor Harvey asked Joey Norton to please give information on this item.

Joey Norton explained that Carrie Wooten has a mobile home on Alred Street that currently has a 10' set back. Joey explained further that Ms. Wooten is asking for a five-foot variance to allow installation of steps so she can get in and out of the mobile home.

Mayor Harvey stated that there are other people here that want to express their concerns. Mayor Harvey offered the other people to speak.

Terra Foster stated that Ms. Wooten's trailer is at her bedroom and is less than 15 feet from the street. Ms. Foster complained that the lights from Ms. Wooten's house keep her awake. Ms. Foster stated that she doesn't like having a mobile home so close to her house.

Ms. Wooten countered Ms. Foster's opinion by saying that the Fosters have only had negative things to say and that they aren't ever happy.

Melvin Foster, Jr. stated that he has never said anything to Ms. Wooten.

Brighten Spivey stated that as long as they are on their own property they should be able to do whatever they want.

Joey Norton stated that looking at maps of the property line it is too close to the house next door but he is sure it is grandfathered in. Joey stated that Ms. Wooten is asking for a variance to install steps only; not a porch. Council Member Earl Parris asked if what he is seeing in a picture is a mobile home. Joey Norton explained that he is looking at a fallen tree. Joey explained further that the property owner received a letter to clean up the property. Joey stated that once the property was cleaned up the owner decided to use the lot. Joey stated that due to the lot size the only way to put the mobile home on the lot was to put it sideways. Joey explained that there is more room from the road to the end of the mobile home than there is from side to side. Council Member Earl Parris stated that a fence is needed between the two properties. Mayor Harvey asked if there are any further questions from Council. With no further questions from Council, Mayor Harvey asked for a motion. Council Member Earl Parris made a motion to approve the 5-foot variance for steps to Ms. Wooten's mobile home. The motion was seconded by Council Member David Ford. The motion carried with Council Members Ford, Windle, Parris, and Money voting in favor of the motion. Council Member Zachary Martin abstained due to familiarity with both parties.

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**LIBRARY BOARD APOINTMENTS:** Mayor Harvey stated that the Chattooga County Library System has notified the city of two vacancies on the Library Board of Trustees. Mayor Harvey stated that nominations are needed for the positions by the next regular meeting.

**CITY RETIREMENT PLAN:** Mayor Harvey stated that the next item for discussion is amendments to the city's retirement plan. Mayor Harvey asked if GMA needs to be here for the discussion. Council Member Earl Parris stated that a lot is paid for the benefit; close to \$370,000. Council Member Parris stated that he thinks that from this time forward new employees should be offered a 401K plan rather than be participants in the current GMA retirement plan. Council Member Parris stated that a 401K plan could be established with the city possibly matching a portion. City Manager Thompson stated that the money used to fund the GMA retirement program is 14% of the total budget. Council Member Parris stated that he would like to see the city match 2%, 3%, or maybe 4% of what new employees put into a 401K. Council Member Parris stated that not adding anyone else to the GMA retirement plan could help with city funds. Council Member Parris asked how the current plan works. City Manager Thompson stated that the plan is 100% funded by the city, the money paid in goes into a pool of funds with 300 other cities and based on the market and employee demographics an actuarial analysis is done to determine what amount of funding is needed by each city. Council Member Parris stated that he would like to hear what GMA has to say and move on this as soon as possible. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. stated that he thinks it is a bold move to pay 100% of retirement. Council Member Money stated that he thinks matching up to 6% would be good. Council Member Money stated that he thinks to fully fund the retirement plan makes the employees winners and the citizens losers. Council Member Money stated that right now there are no city taxes and elected officials need to be good stewards of funds. Council Member Money and Parris both stated that to stop the GMA retirement plan is a good business move.

Council Member David Ford stated that the retirement benefit helps the city get quality employees. Council Member Earl Parris responded stating that the city gets good employees due to the City Manager. Council Member Parris stated that he did not think not having a retirement plan would keep the city from getting good employees. Mayor Harvey stated that this is something that does not need to be done quickly. Mayor Harvey stated that he suggests that GMA look at what options are available. Mayor Harvey stated that moving from one plan to another type of plan takes a lot. Mayor Harvey stated that discussion needs to be held measuring the pros and cons of any change. Council Member Parris stated that he thinks employees need to pay some of the cost for their retirement. City Manager Thompson responded stating that 253 of 300 cities in Georgia provide a 100% city funded retirement plan. City Manager Thompson stated that puts us (Summerville) in the majority for how our retirement plan is handled. Council Member David Ford stated that the item is open for conversation but it is his opinion it needs to be left alone.

City Manager Thompson asked if Council wants to set the item for a further discussion at another regular session or have a special work session; discuss this month or next month. Mayor Harvey responded stating that it would be good to have GMA here to provide the different types of plans and options are available. Mayor Harvey stated that he would like to have a work session with GMA early in April; preferably on a Monday. City Manager Thompson stated that he would look into scheduling a meeting with GMA and what options are possible.

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**CITY HEALTH INSURANCE:** Mayor Harvey asked City Manager Thompson to provide information concerning the city health insurance.

City Manager Thompson stated that consideration has been requested to have a bridge between retirement age of 62 and the Social Security benefit that begins at 65. City Manager Thompson explained that he has prepared a spreadsheet showing the number of eligible people and the annual impact to the budget if the city covered the cost of the insurance. City Manager Thompson explained further that there is no certainty that all of the people would retire or require the bridge insurance coverage. City Manager Thompson stated that he averaged the insurance premium at \$600.00 for 12 months which would be \$7,200.00 per year per eligible employee. Council Member Earl Parris asked if there would be a cost savings between a new employee verses a department head. City Manager Thompson responded that he did not think there would be a cost savings. City Manager Thompson stated further that the city could leave them on the city's health insurance and designate whatever level of benefit the city chooses. Mayor Harvey stated that he thinks the item needs to be looked at closer. Council Member Earl Parris stated that this was done for Vickie and that she is ready to go after 37 years of service. City Manager Thompson stated that GMA could provide some information early April. Mayor Harvey asked if there are any other questions. No further questions were presented. A copy of the spreadsheet listing employees eligible to retire at age 62 from 2016 through 2026 is attached and becomes part of these minutes.

**BUDGET WORK SESSIONS:** Mayor Harvey stated that dates need to be set for 2017 Budget Work Sessions. Mayor Harvey suggested that the meetings be scheduled sometime after the regular April meeting. After a brief discussion it was determined that the Budget Work Session schedule will be set at the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Mr. John Martin stated that he would like for businesses in Summerville have handicapped parking, ramps, and entrances. City Manager Thompson responded that all City of Summerville buildings are ADA compliant. City Manager Thompson explained further that private businesses have to comply when there is a change to the building. Mayor Harvey requested Mr. Martin provide the city with a list of locations that present a problem. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. asked if Mr. Martin has any particular place in mind. Mr. Martin responded that he has a concern about not having van accessible parking. Mr. Martin explained that people pull too close to handicapped parking places which prevents accessibility. Mr. Martin stated that he would like to see a van accessible parking spot with signage. Attorney Albert Palmour stated that he would be happy to have a van accessible parking spot in front of his office.

**PENSION PLAN & TAXES:** Butch Eleam addressed Council stating that having to bring back city taxes is a dooms day scenario that he would hate to see happen but it could be needed.

City Manager Thompson responded stating that there have been no city taxes since 2003 and that 288 out of 250 Georgia cities have retirement plans fully funded by their respective cities.



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**JASON ESPY – SUMMERVILLE NEWS:** Jason Espy of *The Summerville News* asked if work is finished on the water and gas project. Tony Carroll responded stating that the project is not completed. Jason Espy asked if there have been defective meters installed, put in wrong; different types of errors. Jason stated that his information is that there 305 water meters with trouble, 396 gas meters had to be re-programmed, and 112 gas installation errors.

City Manager Thompson responded stating that meters have been read manually during the project to insure that bills issued are correct. City Manager Thompson stated that there have been a few errors but those have been corrected.

**PICTURES:** Mayor Harvey reminded elected officials that pictures will be done after tonight's meeting.

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING:** Mayor Harvey reminded everyone of the Special Called Meeting set for 6 pm on March 21<sup>st</sup>.

**ADJOURN:** With current business having been concluded, Council Member David Ford made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lloyd "Buddy" Windle and carried unanimously.

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**HARRY HARVEY – MAYOR**

Attest:

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**JILL DURHAM – CITY CLERK, G.C.M.C.**