

TOWN OF SHARPSBURG

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
A & O Bridges Community Center
105 Main Street, Sharpsburg GA
January 23, 2023**

MINUTES

6:00PM

Call Council Meeting to Order:

Mayor Cole called the January 23, 2023 Special Called Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mayor Cole led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Establish Quorum:

Town Administrator Floyd Jones stated there was a quorum present.

Those Present: Blue Cole- Mayor; Standley D. Parten- Post 1; Alexander Edge- Post 2 and Tom Teagle- Post 3

Those Not Present: Elizabeth Good- Post 4

Proclamations:

There were no Proclamations.

Review/Approval of Minutes:

1. January 9, 2023 Minutes:

Council reviewed the January 9, 2023 Minutes.

Councilmember Teagle moved to approve the January 9, 2023 Minutes. Councilmember Parten seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1 with Councilmember Good being absent.

Public Hearing:

There was no Public Hearing.

New Business:

1. Leyland Cypress Hedgerow:

Mayor Cole stated that the current Agenda included several items from the last Agenda to speed up the process on some matters. He stated that between the Beckom House and the resident who lives next to the railroad tracks, when all the groundcover was removed and additional brush was removed, it opened up visibility to the resident's back porch and backyard. He stated that now that it is getting toward spring, he asked the Council to approve the purchase of ten Leyland Cypresses to be planted in off-set rows to create a true windbreak and a hedgerow. He asked Council to authorize a not to spend amount of approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500 and he would get someone to install them. He said his goal was to have them planted by the middle of February, but he did not know the timing.

Councilmember Teagle suggested having a landscaping company come to the property and evaluate what may be the best fit for the need. He suggested that Leyland Cypress may not be the best fit for the conditions. Mayor Cole agreed saying that Leyland Cypress as a general placeholder for an evergreen, conifer, tall bush. He agreed the best fit may not be a Leyland Cypress. Mayor Cole added he did not want this matter to delay since, as the parking lot improvements are completed and spring arrives, there will be more people coming with the ability to see into the resident's backyard.

Councilmember Teagle stated he would go to some landscape companies and see what they recommend. Mayor Cole stated he was interested in getting a larger tree- roughly a 30-gallon tree. Councilmember Teagle stated that a 30-gallon tree will cost approximately \$100 dollars each or \$1,000 for ten trees. Mayor Cole suggested the trees could be planted by some of those who are already working on completing tasks in the parking lot. He said if the cost to plant the trees was over \$500 then he would bring that cost back to Council for consideration.

Mayor Cole estimated the plants could be purchased and installed for between \$1,200 and \$1,500 and he stated he would do his best to keep the costs below his estimates. Councilmember Teagle reiterated he would go to local nurseries to determine what plant would best meet the need.

Councilmember Edge moved to authorize the mayor not to spend more than \$1,500 for the purpose of purchasing and installing of Leyland Cypresses or other recommended plants to establish a hedgerow. Councilmember Teagle seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1 with Councilmember Good being absent.

2. Water Complaints- Water Quality:

Mayor Cole stated this item was brought to Council's attention since over the years there has been discussion about general water quality and water issues. He stated that the water provided by Turin has historically been high quality, it has been noticed over the past couple of years that there are problems with the water. He said he is hearing complaints from outside of Council as well, and when he hears of problems he takes it to the Town of Turin who is often responsive. He recommended that Council be aware of and consider how these matters may need to be addressed in the future.

Councilmember Teagle stated he had observed crud in his water filters in years past, and had observed the water at time as an "off" flavor. Mayor Cole stated most of the complaints concern crud in the water, and they often come after there has been a heavy rain. He added that the water system was installed in the 1960s and there is probably breakdown and corrosion in the pipes. He asked for the Council to start considering these matters, and that there is a contract that provides obligations for the water system and its maintenance. Mayor Cole also asked if anyone receives water complaints to forward them to the Administrator Jones so that a record could be maintained on the issues.

Council did not vote or provide direction on this matter.

3. Procurement Policy:

Mayor Cole stated he has been considering the town's procurement policy and he thought the current environment makes the policy cumbersome. He referred to the last meeting where various quotes were provided for a project with big differences in the quotes. He stated that as much as he brags on staff they are not supermen or superwomen, and as a part-time mayor he also has responsibilities apart from the town, and that the policy is burdensome on a very small staff. He suggested that a policy could be considered that maintains the transparency of the town's business and meets all legal requirements, then a policy could be implemented that would help move on any item without stumbling on the procurement policy.

Mayor Cole stated he would like to come to the Council with options on a procurement policy before the large items come up for Council consideration. He stated he did not want there to be surprises for the Council or vendors. He stated that examples of procurement policies will be provided in the coming weeks that will help to advance this matter.

Attorney Sears stated that there are ways where smaller items can be purchases and different levels of expenditures can be assigned per policy. He stated that many quotes are sought. He stated that what has been experienced in the town is that the town needs to provide notice on what it wants as part of its quote process.

Councilmember Teagle stated he did not want this to be an effort to promote social engineering or for town's to meet particular social criteria before a bid is awarded. Mayor Cole replied that was not the plan. Councilmember Teagle explained that social engineering is built in to quotes and contracts that are used by larger governments. Mayor Cole repeated that the goal is only to determine who best do the work or meet the need the best.

Councilman Edge stated that it makes sense to have a simple punch-list that provides what is needed and that punch-list is provided to all those who need to give quotes. So long as the company provides the punch-list then it is a good quote.

Councilmember Teagle stated that the list needs to include language that states that the company provides all legal documents. Mayor Cole agreed, and he said that the process needs to be fair. Council agreed that they did not have all needed information since some of the information had been discussed but not put on paper. Mayor Cole stated that the procedure needs to be clean and easy, but also when staff is getting multiple phone calls every day, it is very hard to prepare and chase down quotes.

Councilmember Edge stated the best approach would be to create a form for procurements and then build a policy around it. He thought having a form would be helpful since if he had something to reference it would be helpful. He thought a reference document would be very helpful for the Council to weigh its decisions. Mayor Cole agreed with Councilmember Edge's assessment.

Attorney Sears stated the Council needs to have a workshop and look at the current policy along with state requirements. He added that the town needs to follow the town's ethics ordinance and know how to avoid actual conflicts opposed to perceived conflicts. He suggested that there may not have been a need for the mayor to recuse himself at the last meeting and vote- and it is good to know the difference between actual conflicts of interest and perceived conflicts of interest. He added the policy could be revisited to determine what best works for the town so long as the town will abide by the policy and so long as it meets state requirements.

Council did not vote or provide other direction on this matter.

Old Business:

1. 39 Main Street Update:

Mayor Cole asked Attorney Sears if it is appropriate to produce a working bid sheet for this project and go back to the vendors for quotes. Attorney Sears replied it would be appropriate and he confirmed that the bid sheet does not have to be approved by Council.

Attorney Sears suggested looking at the three proposals and then place it on the bid sheet. He added there needs to be consideration on if there is asbestos at the house because, if there is asbestos, then the city will have to deal with Environmental Protection Division (EPD) inspections. He stated the first thing to do is for the vendors to go on site and have then see the structure and determine if there is asbestos. Councilmember Teagle stated there is a distinction between having contained asbestos verses uncontained asbestos and how it affects its disposal. Similar discussion occurred regarding the disposal of lead paint.

Council did not vote or provide direction on this matter.

2. Back Parking Lot Fences:

Mayor Cole stated after the last meeting, he had the vendors provide additional information on the quotes they provided for fencing. Councilmember Teagle pointed out that the quotes were for different lengths of fence. Council discussed various aspects of the quotes provided. It was mentioned that the garbage and scrap material at the back of the property needs to be removed or repaired.

Councilmember Teagle moved to award the bid to Certifab. Councilmember Edge seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1 with Councilmember Good being absent.

Public Comments:

Polly Garlington: Ms. Garlington questioned the recusals from last week and stated she looked at the town's charter. She stated the charter uses the words "directly" and "indirectly" in contractual matters related to town business. She noted that earlier in the meeting the words "actual" and "perceived" were used. She asked what was the difference and Attorney Sears stated that "direct" meant if it was the mayor owned it and "indirect" meant if it was the mayor's daughter owned it. He reiterated he did not think the mayor needed to recuse himself at the last meeting since he did not have direct or indirect connections to the matter at hand. Attorney Sears stated Council needs to be aware if they have a direct interest with town matters.

Allen Nolan: Mr. Nolan stated that when the trees are purchased and planted someone will have to water them for the first year. He further suggested the discussed procurement policy could be obtained from a larger city and utilized. Mayor Cole added that a possibility is that the town could piggy back of another municipalities. Attorney Sears added that it would be like working off a state contract.

Polling of Council:

Councilmember Parten: Councilmember Parten asked if any effort had been made on getting the Beckom House fumigated. Mayor Cole stated that no effort had been taken about fumigating the house at this time.

Administrator's Minutes:

Community Center Renovation: Administrator Jones stated he received a call from Luis stating the work at the Community Center had been completed on Friday. He asked Council if a couple of members could do a work around inspection of the center to see if the work met their satisfaction before the final payment would be made. Council agreed to the request.

Building Security: Administrator Jones stated he is continuing the work on getting enhanced security and provided an example of the types of measures under consideration.

Surplus Tables and Chairs: Administrator Jones said he was made aware of a conversation about surplus Ing the tables and chairs in the Community Center and he asked for an update on that discussion. He added that the town has an approved budget to replace the tables and chairs, but he wanted to be sure that there was not a situation where there would be an overwhelming number of tables and chairs in the center while decisions were being made on the older items.

Miscellaneous Items: Administrator Jones stated he was looking into replacing the copy machine, was taking steps to get codification started, and wanted to get with the auditors to review the town's financials. He concluded there are many moving parts taking place on a daily basis but those were some of the more immediate matters at hand.

Mayor's Updates:

Project List: Mayor Cole distributed some task lists that have built up throughout the years including task lists for the back parking lot and pond. He said this information is provided so that Council knows what he has worked on and is continuing to work on. He said the list shows the different projects and how the cumbersome procurement policy burdens the process- especially given the limited budget and staff that is available. He add that he does not have all the good ideas and that Council can augment it with better ideas, and he hoped that Council will see some of the tasks to be completed and would take them up and run with them. He added that the list is a matter of public record. He said as he is working and trying to find ways to do things both efficiently and effectively, and when someone does show up and is willing to help, then the process is hindered. He said if someone wants to help the town welcomes the help, but he said there is a large amount of work with limited personnel- then there needs to be an ability to go forward. He thanked Councilmember Teagle with his work in getting the Community Center completed. He said the Town of Sharpsburg is the little town that keeps on going, and he wanted to make sure there were no undue roadblocks to the process and that when help is available it can be used.

Ms. Garlington spoke up volunteering to run the town's newsletter. Mayor Cole agreed saying it was done the first couple of years but it fell off when the pandemic hit.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment:

Councilmember Teagle moved to adjourn the January 23, 2023 Council meeting. Councilmember Parten seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The January 23, 2023 Council meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Floyd L. Jones, Town Administrator

Blue Cole, Mayor

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Sharpsburg Town Council, in Sharpsburg, Georgia, on the sixth day of February 2023.

Floyd L. Jones, Town Administrator

