

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF AUSTELL
FEBRUARY 4, 2008**

Present: Joe Jerkins, Mayor
Kirsten Anderson
Beverly James Boyd
Randy Green
Virginia Reagan
David "Bo" Traylor
Scott Thomas

The regular meeting of the Mayor and Austell City Council was held on February 4, 2008, at 7:00 P.M. at City Hall.

Also present were: Scott Kimbrough, City Attorney; Carolyn Duncan, City Clerk; Sandra Farmer, Assistant Director, General Administration; Randy Bowens, Public Works Director; Jim Graham, Community Development Director; Bob Starrett, Police Chief; Tim Williams, Fire Chief.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jerkins called the meeting to order. Pastor Bob Neal of Freedom Fellowship Church gave the Invocation. Mayor Jerkins led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Jerkins asked if any member of the Council would like to add items to the agenda. No one did.

Mayor Jerkins presented Landy Maupin of Court Services with a five year service pin and thanked her for her years of service and dedication to the City of Austell.

2. CONSENT AGENDA – INFORMATION AND UPDATE

(No Action Required by Council – See Specific Department Director before Meeting.)

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve Bills
- B. Approve Legal Bills \$ 600.00
- C. Approve Minutes of Regular Meeting January 7, 2008

Mr. Thomas moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Jerkins to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Mr. Green. Motion passed (6-0).

4. EXCEPTION TO CONSENT AGENDA

5. CITIZENS REPORT

Mayor Jerkins asked if anyone would like to speak to the Mayor and Council.

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Ms. Sue Cox of Sweetwater Valley Condominium, I am the President of the Homeowners Association and I have lived there for a number of years. I have a number of homeowners with me who have lived there for thirty years. I have a big concern about how the city has grown in the thirty years I have been here and we still have three officers patrolling at night and this is basically how many we had when I first moved in to Sweetwater Valley thirty years ago. We have started to get a rash of attempted break-ins. There were two section eight housing subdivisions in the works and my concern is how law enforcement can contain the amount of neighborhoods and people in this area. The officers get radioed and have to shoot across the city on another call. I just want to ask when we will see in the budget as to when more officers will be hired. Mayor Jerkins stated he doubted this would happen anytime soon. He stated, when I came into office we had two officers who worked at night in the Police Department eighteen years ago. We cannot assign two to three officers just to your neighborhood. Ms. Cox stated she was not asking for that. I know when the officer was killed in the eighties there were three assigned. Mr. Thomas stated because of State and Federal Grants we did have extra officers on staff back in the eighties and this is why the City of Austell had three at the time. Ms. Cox asked why could we not do that again? Mayor Jerkins stated we do not charge much tax compared to the County. We charge 3.123 Millage Rate and it is almost zero taxes. When I went into office it was almost six mills and we cut it to get it down over a period of twelve years, to get it down to 3.123. We would like to put more patrols but we just cannot right now. We have more Police Officers per thousand than Cobb County, probably by twice as much. Chief Starrett can verify this statement. Mr. Green stated the City of Austell response time was a lot faster than Cobb County. Mayor Jerkins stated five years ago we were tied with Smyrna as the fastest response time in the State of Georgia. Ms. Cox stated she had no issue with our Police Officers. I worry about them being out there. Ms. Boyd asked where the section eight homes are. Ms. Cox stated they are on Maxham Road and two miles from where I live. Mayor Jerkins stated if I am not mistaken section eight is four hundred thousand dollar homes. Section eight is like the government pays for some of the house notes for them and they are not fifty thousand dollar homes they could be four hundred thousand dollar homes. Ms. Cox stated she realized this, but, what they will look like in six months to a year from now. Mayor Jerkins stated some of the homes would be section eight but not all of them. Ms. Boyd stated some of these subdivisions are in Cobb County. Another point I would like to make is Cobb County backs us up and so does the Sheriff's Department and we all work together. We have contracted with the Fire Department and we work together always. The majority of the people are in Cobb County and not in the city limits of Austell.

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Ms. Cox stated she had come as a spokesperson for the whole entire area. Ms. Anderson asked Ms. Cox if they had a neighborhood watch at all. Ms. Cox stated they were reinitiating this and Officer England came out a month ago and this was discussed. I haven't seen any movement from the person we appointed as Chairman but we will have some discussion on this matter. Officer England brought all the pamphlets to us and we will definitely get this organized. Mayor Jerkins stated he wished we could have a hundred officers at night but we just can't afford it.

Ms. Bev Givens stated her name and stated she approves of the City's response time and how she appreciates the City of Austell. Mr. Noah Givens reiterated the same statement. Mayor Jerkins stated between the City and the County we have everything covered.

**6. GAS SYSTEM REPRESENTATIVE
JOE JERKINS**

Mr. Kimbrough stated he attended the meeting and the adoption of the gas rate schedule for a two month period was implemented.

**7. FINANCE DEPARTMENT
BEVERLY JAMES BOYD, CHAIRPERSON
Denise Soesbee, Director**

A. Financial Report

**8. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
KIRSTEN ANDERSON, CHAIRPERSON
Carolyn Duncan, Director**

A. No Report

**9. POLICE DEPARTMENT
VIRGINIA REAGAN
Bob Starrett, Police Chief**

A. Police Report
B. Code Enforcement Report

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**10. FIRE DEPARTMENT
SCOTT THOMAS, CHAIRPERSON
Tim Williams, Fire Chief**

A. Fire Report

**11. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
DAVID “BO” TRAYLOR, CHAIRPERSON
Randy Bowens, Director**

- A. Adoption of Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
Mr. Traylor stated nearly ten (10) months ago a partnership between Cobb County and its six municipalities was started and will result in the formulation of a 25-year Comprehensive Transportation Plan. This long-range plan will change the face of Cobb County as well as the lives of those who live, work, shop, and play here. The study has been all-inclusive, involving political and community leaders from Cobb County and the Cities of Acworth, Austell, Kennesaw, Marietta, Powder Springs, and Smyrna. In addition, experts in transportation use planning, staff from planning partners such as the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Transportation, and the public at large have been involved. Integrating all of the information collected and data analyzed, the Comprehensive Transportation Plan will support the land use policy, plans, and strategies contained in the County and City comprehensive transportation plans and will serve as a guide for transportation decisions over the next 25 years.

Mr. Traylor stated tonight, Mr. Harry McGinnis, of Croy Engineering, will present a brief overview of the Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Mr. McGinnis thanked the Mayor and Council for inviting him and proceeded to give his presentation.

Mr. Traylor moved to follow the recommendation of the Public Works Committee to adopt the Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan as presented. Seconded by Ms. Boyd. Motion passed (6-0).

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12. PARKS DEPARTMENT

**RANDY GREEN, CHAIRPERSON
Jim Graham, Director**

A. No Report

13. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**BEVERLY JAMES BOYD, CHAIRPERSON
Jim Graham, Director**

A. No Report

14. CITY ATTORNEY – DUPREE & KIMBROUGH

A. No Report

15. MAYOR'S REPORT

A. CMA MEETING

DATE: February 12, 2008
TIME: 6:30 P.M.
LOCATION: Kennesaw

B. 50 Year Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding Traffic Control Devices
Mayor Jerkins stated he and Mr. Kimbrough had talked about a Hold Harmless Agreement from Cobb County but Mr. Kimbrough hasn't been able to get with the county attorneys to do this. I am not sure if they would have signed one anyway. I don't know if the council would like to pass this without a Hold Harmless Agreement and if not we would have to bring this back next month. My thoughts are the traffic lights belong to Cobb County and if they do not function properly it would be Cobb County responsibility and not the City of Austell. Mr. Kimbrough thinks we need a Hold Harmless Agreement. Mr. Kimbrough stated the Hold Harmless Agreement would certainly put this in writing. Mayor Jerkins stated Cobb County will be in control. Whatever you would like to do. Ms. Boyd asked when is this due? Mayor Jerkins stated they had not given him a time.

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Ms. Boyd moved to follow the recommendation of the City Council to give Mayor Jerkins the authority to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding Traffic Control Devices with Cobb County. It is a fifty year lease agreement with the county and the county is willing to accept the responsibility of maintaining and continuing to maintain, repair and replace existing devices in the future when approved by the County traffic control devices, which is the purpose of this agreement. This will include, traffic signs, flashers, school flashers, and vehicle approach flashers located within the City. Also, to give Mayor Jerkins authority to accept and receive a Hold Harmless Letter from the County and if not we will sign the agreement. Seconded by Ms. Reagan. Motion passed (6-0).

C. Judge's Compensation

Mayor Jerkins stated we discussed this at the pre-agenda meeting and it is my recommendation to increase his pay from \$1950.00 per month to \$2250.00 per month.

Ms. Boyd moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Jerkins to approve the Judge's Compensation from \$1,950.00 per month to \$2,250.00 per month because of additional responsibilities. Seconded by Ms. Reagan. Motion passed (6-0).

D. Planning & Zoning & Variance Board Compensation

Mayor Jerkins stated he would like to recommend a pay increase of \$25.00 per month to \$50.00 per month. Mayor Jerkins stated it has been the same since I have been in office for 18 years.

Ms. Boyd moved to follow the recommendation to approve the Planning & Zoning & Variance Board Compensation from \$25.00 per meeting to \$50.00 per meeting. Seconded by Mr. Traylor. Motion passed (6-0).

Mayor Jerkins asked if anyone had any questions. Ms. Anderson stated she would like to make an announcement. Representative David Scott will be at the Collar Community Center this Saturday, February 9, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. for a Town Hall Meeting. Anyone interested please attend.

16. ADJOURN

Ms. Boyd moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Jerkins to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Motion passed (6-0).