

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF AUSTELL  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2015**

Present: Mayor Joe Jerkins  
Ollie Clemons  
Randy Green  
Scott Thomas  
Suzanne Thomason

Absent: Kirsten Anderson  
Virginia Reagan

The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council was held on Monday, September 14, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. at City Hall.

Also present were: Scott Kimbrough, City Attorney; Carolyn Duncan, City Clerk; Denise Soesbee, Finance Director; Jim Graham, Community Affairs Director; Pat Maxwell, Fire Chief; and Bob Starrett, Police Chief.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Jerkins called the meeting to order and Pastor John Bailey gave the Invocation. Mayor Jerkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Jerkins asked if anyone would like to add items to the Agenda. No one added any items to the Agenda.

Mayor Jerkins stated we have a very important person here tonight to honor. Mayor Jerkins presented Lieutenant Tim Dobbs with a Plaque and Pin for 30 years of service. Mayor Jerkins thanked Lieutenant Dobbs for his service and his loyalty to the City of Austell. Mayor Jerkins thanked Lieutenant Dobbs and told him what a great job he has done in the Fire Department and most of all he has been our Elvis all these years at the City Christmas Parties.

Mayor Jerkins stated he would like to recognize Pastor Tim Ridgeway who is our Chaplain for the police Department as well as for the City of Austell. Pastor Ridgeway attended school in Toccoa, GA so he could be our Chaplain for the Police and the City. I cannot thank him enough for doing this for us and he is also the Pastor at First Baptist Church in Austell, GA.

I would also like to mention Pastor Tim Ridgeway, Pastor David Pearce, Presbyterian Church, Reverend Mike Martin, First United Methodist Church, came to my office about a year ago and met with me. They stated they would like to do some things in the City. They suggested trying to get our communities together and if we could get all of the Preachers together in this area to work with the government and the schools.

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Pastor Tim, Pastor David and Pastor Mike got this started and it has been a year now and they are meeting with several Preachers now. All of the six schools are meeting now and all the Pastors met with me this past Wednesday. Pastor John Bailey has also been a big part of it. Pastor Lynn from Orangehill Baptist Church also participated and who is out of the City. They are all working with me and the schools and the churches to make this community a better place. One of their goals is to work with the schools to make sure everyone graduates and help in this area. I would like to thank each and every one of the Pastor's for what they have already accomplished and what a great job they have done. Pastor Tim and Pastor John have been leaders to get things accomplished. They also started the Prayer Breakfast two years ago and it has grown since then. Dianne Evans played a big part in the breakfast from the Methodist Church. The three churches, the Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, and the First Baptist cooked the food and served the food. We had a lot of employees from the City attend and I guess it was over a hundred people who attended. It was a big success and I just want to thank you all.

**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 \$1,245.80
- C. Approve Minutes of Regular Council Meeting August 3, 2015

*Mr. Green moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Jerkins to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Motion passed (4-0).*

**4. EXCEPTION TO CONSENT AGENDA**

**5. CITIZENS REPORT**

Mayor Jerkins asked if anyone would like to speak to the Council tonight. Ms. Kimberly Willingham stated she wanted to ask about the abatements in her subdivision. Mayor Jerkins asked Mr. Kimbrough if he could answer Ms. Willingham question. Mr. Kimbrough stated we have four or five abatements that I have scheduled to go to court the end of this month. I don't think we will be able to do that because of service issues. But, it will be in the next four to six weeks. I anticipate this will happen to these as happened to the others, no opposition and raising them or tearing them down. Creditor's and Mortgage companies who have an interest in the property but not the structure. Ms. Willingham stated the property across the way where the foundation is present what is the status on this? Mr. Kimbrough stated I have not touched base with the Johnsons who are the owners of that property but I will make a note to do that tomorrow.

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The Lawyer for the mortgage company contacted me and asked if I could delay it, so they could file a response. But again, he doesn't have an interest in the structure or the foundation but they still have a lien on the property there and that will continue until they give that lien up. The mortgage company did not have any problem with the structure being demolished and now there is just a foundation. I don't anticipate there will be any problems allowing the City to remove that foundation if the Johnsons do not remove it which they said they would. Mayor Jerkins asked Mr. Kimbrough if he would check into this matter and get it taken care of. Ms. Willingham stated she wanted to ask about her neighborhood watch. There is some stuff going on in the neighborhood and I am the only one for the neighborhood watch. I don't know if we need to get the word out and tell people if they see something odd you need to call. If we don't try and stop it of course it will keep getting worse. It has gotten worse in the last three or four months. People shooting guns, gang signs, and gang related activities. Mr. Kimbrough stated there is no official neighborhood watch program except for that man right there Chief Starrett. Chief Starrett stated what you need to do is contact the Police Department and tell us you would like a neighborhood watch program. Ms. Willingham stated I would like for it to be more than just me. Chief Starrett stated you would have to contact me and we would setup a meeting. Ms. Willingham stated she would contact the Police Department.

Ms. Terry Pilgrim stated her name and stated she lived on Owens Drive. I had filed a Code Enforcement complaint about the garbage cans left out on the road on Edith Street. As of today when I came in, there were thirteen cans still out there and they are there seven days a week. I read the Code Enforcement they have to be removed within seventy-two hours and they are not. The issue is there are small children on Edith Street now and there has been several times we have come down Edith Street and little kids have come around the blue cans and they cannot be seen until they are already out in the road. I have filled out one of the Code Enforcement complaint forms and that was almost two months ago. Ms. Duncan asked for Ms. Pilgrim's phone number so she could have Mr. Bowens call her. Ms. Pilgrim stated her phone number 678-294-1536. Ms. Pilgrim stated she had another question, is it illegal to hunt in the City limits of Austell. Mayor Jerkins stated you cannot hunt with a gun at all but there are certain places you can hunt with a bow. Ms. Pilgrim asked Terrell Park? Mayor Jerkins stated not on City property. Ms. Pilgrim stated we had several hunters down there last night and I called the Police and they came out and tried to find them. I don't know who it was but I have a big concern for that because I have grandchildren that live with me and they are outside playing. It wasn't even dark and when I left about four-thirty there was deer in my yard already and they come into the duplex behind me and eat from the apple tree. My concern is I have men down in the field hunting and my children are outside playing. Mr. Green stated it is illegal to hunt there because it is City property.

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Mayor Jerkins stated we do not allow hunting on City property. Ms. Pilgrim stated they were down there last night. My husband and I stood out there and I even yelled at them. Mr. Green asked if they had bows. Ms. Pilgrim stated she was sure they had bows and they were all in the woods with their flashlights. I knew they had shot a deer and obviously trying to find it. I was on my phone calling the Police and obviously they heard me calling because the flashlights went off. The Police walked around for a few minutes but did not find anything. Mayor Jerkins stated they must live pretty close. Ms. Pilgrim stated it is possible but I didn't see where they came from. Mr. Green asked if they had vehicles parked there. Ms. Pilgrim stated no. I looked out my window and there was two baby deer in my back yard and then I noticed somebody walking on the line and into the woods. I told my husband I thought someone was hunting down there. The deer starting crossing the road I starting clapping and trying to scare them so they wouldn't go down that way. We did see a car parked where it dead ends down there but by then it was dark and you couldn't see what kind of car it was. Mr. Green asked is any of that property posted down there. Mr. Green stated maybe they can hunt across the creek. Chief Maxwell stated if they shoot a deer across the creek it is legal, but if it is not across the creek it is illegal. Mr. Green stated we need to get with the Game Warden and let them start watching it.

Mayor Jerkins asked if anyone else would like to speak to the Mayor and Council. Gleda James stated her name and stated she had had been at the springs for thirty-two years. Maybe there have been a few years that hunters didn't fire their guns. But now, it must be the same person doing this and I have reported it, but they still do it and it is on City property. They go in the back beyond that swamp area. This happens every year and I am afraid to walk out the door because of the bullets coming from that direction. I just put up with it. I came tonight to tell you, and most of you already know, that Louise Suggs died on August 7, 2015. She was ninety-one years old. I am now working with a group that has decided to establish a golf school for students ages seven through seventeen. We already have the first tee finished. We are talking about adding a fairway and two greens but that is to be determined. Speaking of Louise and I spoke with Chief Starrett and there is an oil painting of Louise Suggs in the nineteen fifties that Bob Black has, but I have never seen the painting. It would be very nice if the City acquired the painting to hang somewhere besides the museum. Some place prominent like here at City Hall. Also, your curator of the museum Mr. Johnson told me about a month ago he has spoken with South Cobb High School about naming the sports program for Louise Suggs. I have not heard from Mr. Johnson as of tonight. As I said Louise Suggs died on August 7, and she did have a funeral and she was cremated. Her family is buried in West View Cemetery and many years ago she told me that was where she wanted to be buried. Her ashes are probably buried there. Are there any questions? No questions were asked. Mayor Jerkins asked if anyone else would like to speak to the Mayor and Council.

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Pastor Tim Ridgeway stated our church, the Austell First Baptist Church, is hosting our second annual service honoring the First Responders. I will like to invite the Council to be part of this service.

**6. GAS SYSTEM REPRESENTATIVE  
JOE JERKINS**

Mayor Jerkins stated he mentioned at the meeting at Pre-Agenda and the Gas Bonds have paid in full. The gas prices have come down just a little bit.

**7. FINANCE DEPARTMENT  
VIRGINIA REAGAN, CHAIRPERSON  
Denise Soesbee, Director**

A. Financial Report

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

A. No Report

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

A. Police Report  
B. Code Enforcement Report

**10. FIRE DEPARTMENT  
RANDY GREEN, CHAIRPERSON  
Pat Maxwell, Fire Chief**

A. Fire Report  
B. Reception – Tim Dobbs – 30 Years Service

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**11. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
KIRSTEN ANDERSON, CHAIRPERSON  
Randy Bowens, Director**

A. No Report

**12. PARKS DEPARTMENT  
SCOTT THOMAS, CHAIRPERSON  
Jim Graham, Director**

A. No Report

**13. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
OLLIE CLEMONS, CHAIRPERSON  
Jim Graham, Director**

A. No Report

**14. ATTORNEY, DUPREE & KIMBROUGH**

A. No Report

**15. MAYOR'S REPORT**

A. 800 Mhz

Mayor Jerkins stated this is renewing a ten year contract. The last contract was ten years. It is a radio system we own in Cobb County. All six cities participate with Cobb County. S.P.L.O.S.T. will pay for three more towers throughout the entire County. There will be very little changes for our costs in this once a year and it is so much per radio.

*Mr. Clemons moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Jerkins to approve the 800 Mhz Renewal Contract. Seconded by Mr. Green. Motion passed (4-0).*

**16. ADJOURN**

*Mr. Thomas moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Jerkins to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Thomas.*

