

**MINUTES
MAULDIN CITY COUNCIL
MARCH 17, 2014
7:00 PM**

Members present were Mayor Dennis Raines, Council members Bob Cook, Dale Black, Gabe Hunter, Taft Matney, Larry Goodson and Scott Crosby. City Attorney John Duggan and City Administrator Trey Eubanks were also present.

1. Call to order. – Mayor Raines
 - a. Invocation- Jerry Smith
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance- Councilman Crosby
 - c. Welcome- Mayor Raines
2. Proclamations and Presentations- Mauldin Chamber; Lupus proclamation; Zoning Board member presentations

The chamber golf tournament is coming up soon.

Mayor Raines read the Lupus proclamation.

Councilman Crosby presented plaques to Tom Bennett and James Bagwell in appreciation of their service on the Zoning Board. Phemy Moore was not able to attend the meeting.
3. Reading and approval of minutes.- February 17, 2014; special called meeting March 4, 2014- Councilman Black made a motion to approve the February 17, 2014 minutes with Councilman Hunter seconding. The vote was unanimous (7-0). Councilman Hunter made a motion to approve the first special called meeting on March 4, 2014 minutes with Councilman Crosby seconding. The vote was unanimous (7-0). Councilman Hunter made a motion to approve the second special called meeting on March 14th minutes with Councilman Goodson seconding. The vote was unanimous (7-0).
4. Public Comment.
 - a. Bud Greer: I am Bud Greer. I live at 318 South Main Street. I attended a meeting last month on the sewer. There are a couple of comments I would like to make. One thing that was brought up is that Mauldin has a lesser rate than the other surrounding communities, but there are other factors that are not mentioned. The numbers are pretty easy to put up there, but there are other things to consider. Age, Mauldin is the youngest City of the ones that are talked about. Other variables are the quality of material, and quality

of workmanship, and how the lines have been maintained. There are also a couple of rumors around town that the some of the City Council are looking at buying a couple of pieces of property, the City Center, and some new ball fields. If this is true, the money that could be applied to these projects could be applied to the sewer so that the citizens do not have to support an increase to the sewer system.

Also, there is an issue of a surplus. I am in favor of a surplus, but that money could also go to supplement the cost. As someone else has pointed out, any increases in the sewer fee are really back door taxes. I understand the maintenance of the sewer, but I don't understand doing all of these other projects if we need money to maintain the sewer. Thank you.

- b. Danny Day: I live at 912 Fargo Street. I think by now you know how I feel about fees versus property tax. I wanted to take a look back after the meeting. Someone suggested I look at the general fund. I went back and looked at FY 2013 and FY 2014 and what I have given you is a table of data. We had \$6,531,516 to spend at our discretion. The sewer fund increased by \$15,000. The City's fiscal policy requires an unassigned fund balance of 25-35%. As of June, 2013, this percentage was approximately 53%.

The 2014 budget had a 6.8% increase for a total general fund budget of \$9 million and something. I did note that Council's budget line had a \$263,000 increase, and the biggest part of that is \$250,000 for a capital item yet to be determined. I also noticed that we have a debt service every year of \$800,000. From the last meeting, the sewer rehab cost was predicted to be about \$4.5 million dollars. We have money available, why would we want to issue a bond where you will have about a million dollars in interest and issuance costs? I would suggest you look at assigning \$2,000,000 of the unassigned fund balance to the sewer fund. The \$250,000 assigned under the Council line, I think you should allocate that to the sewer fund.

My recommendation is that you do not tax Mauldin's citizens and give more money to Greenville Water, which currently wastes taxpayer dollars of \$80,000 a year. I can't get over that. The bond should not be issued without a referendum. People should be informed of this data. If it is wrong, please correct me. If it is right, it should go to referendum. We should have put it on the ballot last year, but some of the council members did not want to look at this. Why would you want to be obligated to pay a bond?

- c. Jerry Smith: I am Jerry Smith and I live at 115 Hickory Lane. I appreciate your letting me come in front of you. With the first Thursday of May, and it happens to be the 1st of May this year, I would ask that you consider, as you have so graciously in the past, allowing me and my staff to come to city hall for the National Day of Prayer out front as we have in the past. I realize you are not in a position to meet this request at this moment, but Mauldin has been a City of the National Day of Prayer since the late 1990's, which means we have done this for about 15 years now. The City has always presented us with the space, time, personnel and equipment that we needed for the National Day of Prayer.

It is a National event and backed by the federal government, as well as the President. I am requesting the City to consider allowing us to make this presentation again this year. We look forward to this every year and have quite an event with the pastor's participation. Thank you.

- d. Tommy Shaluely: I live at 969 Fargo Street. Mr. Day took most of my thunder, so I will keep this short. The taxpayers of this City gave the City \$16 million dollars last year to run this city. \$16 million dollars. Where is it all going? Where is it?

On the top of my list is that Sports Center, and I know you are going to be all over me about that, but it needs to be fixed. I am a member of the sports center, but I brought this up three years ago. We transferred \$220,000 into the sports center fund to keep it going. Now we are putting \$330,000 in it. That will pay for sewer maintenance. I am asking you fix the thing. You must think it is a lot easier to raise taxes than to fix the problem.

My second issue is I looked at the general fund also, and the surplus is to help with the maintenance of the City. What else do you need it for? You will still have 35% left and that is good. We need to be managing our money, not raising taxes.

5. Report from City Administrator- Trey reported the awnings should be up in a few weeks at the cultural center and the public works department will be installing the picnic table bases.

The energy management plan is saving us money. We are having some issues with the lighting, and we will meet with the company that installed the lights tomorrow morning.

70 employees participated in the lunch and learn on Friday.

Trey cited the updated sign ordinance, the landscape ordinance, and the business license abatement incentive as examples of where City Council, through their actions are making the City more business friendly. Customer service training was conducted last week for the Business and Development Services department. A nice letter was sent in commenting on the help one of our citizens received from several members of the department. Economic Development and revolving loan fund information has been placed on our website and provided to our chamber of commerce and Kim Hamel is going around the City with the chamber director to foster good relations with our businesses.

Councilman Black asked if anything else has been done on the Veteran's Memorial. Trey will contact Harold Sherbert, who has connections with Veterans groups to get the project completed. Councilman Goodson said he would like Janice Holcombe to stay involved with the project as well.

6. Reports from Standing Committees

a. Recreation (Chairman Matney)

- i. Reports and Communications from Recreation Director – Van reported 2200 participants in Senior programs. The Sports Center is continuing to stay busy. New classes are being added.

Improvements are being made to the baseball program and we are continuing to move forward. Opening Day will be March 29th. March 22nd is the Peacock Strides for Babies 5K run. The Easter Egg Drop is on April 12th.

Chairman Matney asked Van to elaborate on the changes being made to the baseball program based on the public meeting last month. Van said that the duties will be divided so that one staff member is dedicated to certain age groups to help with our customer service. We have started utilizing signup software a lot more with emails being sent. The department also now has a twitter account to get the word out about what we offer and different events. We have about 400 kids signed up for baseball right now.

Chairman Matney asked about affiliation with someone. Van said we are in the process of looking in to that. Chairman Matney said he has been talking to people and they are already seeing positive program changes.

b. Public Safety (Chairman Cook)

- i. Reports and Communications from Police Chief- Some reassignments have been done and some people have received promotions. Councilman Cook said he sent council a report on the Planters Row traffic calming for information.
- ii. Reports and Communications from Municipal Clerk of Court /

Administrative Judge- Angela Martin reminded council that jury trials will be held April 28-May 2nd . 94 cases were processed March 6th and 7th through pretrial conferences.

Councilman Black asked if a replacement administrative judge had been found. Angela said she and Trey are working on that now.

- iii. Reports and Communications from Fire Chief.- Chief Sapp reported 191 calls and the response time was 2.9 minutes.
- c. Planning and Economic Development (Chairman Hunter)
- i. Reports and Communications from the Economic Developer- John Gardner said he is working with several new businesses on sites. Esurance made a big announcement last month that will be a great asset to the City. The Roads Commissioner is being effective in making sure we get projects on the list for County Council to consider. A Gilder Creek greenway project will be asked for inclusion on the list. Councilman Goodson asked if any businesses have asked for façade grants. John said we haven't had any applications turned in. Businesses have been provided the paperwork, however.
 - ii. Office of Cultural Affairs report- George McLeer reported the department is very busy and is booked with events. A theatre production will be held this weekend. A town hall meeting will be held on April 3rd with our legislators. This will be sponsored by the Chamber. April 5th is the date for the Garden Club Spring Fling.
- d. Public Works (Chairman Goodson)
- i. Reports and Communications from the PW Director- Mike Lambert showed some graphs to illustrate the projects his departments are working on. This data comes from the PubWorks software. The ball field lighting project continues and is on schedule. Councilman Black asked about the maintenance of the bridge over 276 and 417. The base of the bridge is overgrown. Mike said he would check into that.

- e. Finance and Policy (Chairman Black)
 - i. Reports and Communications from Finance Director- Holly Abercrombie reported a budget workshop will be held tomorrow at 5:30 pm at the Senior Center. The year to date comparisons for this year and last year are pretty well in line.

- f. Building Codes (Chairman Crosby)
 - i. Reports and Communications from Business and Development Services Director.- Kim Hamel reported on commercial and residential activity. Kim went out on four business visits with Pat Pomeroy. These visits will continue so the department can get a feel for what the businesses think of the City and how things are going. Pre-application meetings are being held in the department to help the prospective business owners. After the meeting, the zoning specialist and inspectors go and do a building assessment, which can help hold off problems later. Business license renewal cards will be going out next week and staff will be working from 8am- 6pm on April 8,9,10, 14 and 15th to help business owners who work until 5:00 p.m. A dedicated business license inquiry phone number and email address have also been implemented.

Councilman Goodson said he would like for our ordinances to be looked at to see if they can be reworded to be less restrictive. John Duggan said some of the ordinances have to be worded with shall because they are state laws and are therefore required. They stated staff has started the process and will suggest revisions where they can be made.

7. Unfinished Business

- a. Consideration and action on business license ordinance amendment abatement (Building Codes)- Councilman Cook made a motion to approve this ordinance on second reading. Councilman Matney seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (7-0). Councilman Black asked about longevity for business owners and if they will receive an incentive. Mayor Raines said this ordinance will be done in phases and longevity will be addressed in the next phase. This item will come to committee once that

part is ready. Councilman Goodson said he would like all businesses to get a discount, not just the ones who have not been delinquent in the last 5 years.

- b. Consideration and action on rezoning 305 South Main (Building Codes)- Councilman Goodson made a motion to accept this rezoning on second reading. Councilman Cook seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (7-0).
- c. Consideration and action on sewer user fee increase (Committee of the Whole)- Councilman Cook made a motion to table this until Council can receive more information. Councilman Matney seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (7-0).

8. New Business

- a. Consideration and action on CDBG resolution (Finance)- Chairman Black made a motion to accept the CDBG resolution with Councilman Hunter seconding. The vote was unanimous (7-0).
- b. Consideration and action on BZA applications (Building Codes)- Leo Joyce, Patrick O'Shields and Ray Atchinson were all appointed to the Board of Zoning Appeals by ballot.
- c. Consideration and action on chamber alcohol request (Committee of the Whole)- Councilman Cook made a motion to accept the Chamber's request with Councilman Matney seconding. The vote was unanimous (7-0).

9. Public Comment- None

10. Council requests.

11. Adjournment.- Mayor Raines adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Miller
Municipal Clerk