



**TOWN OF THUNDERBOLT
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023
6:00 PM
REVISED**

AGENDA HEARING

**Public has five minutes per person to ask questions or comment on any agenda item.
Mayor Williams opened the public hearing up at 6 pm.**

Stella Lavin, 3125 Robertson Ave, stated the Community Improvement Association is looking for ways to address litter in the town. They were thinking of reaching out to high schoolers that need community service hours. Mrs. Lavin had concerns about liability to the town and the association. Clerk of Council Denion offered to provide the connection with Keep Georgia Beautiful to assist with the waiver of liability and other tools they have available.

Merideth Allen, 3220 Falligant Ave, President of Community Improvement Association, asked about the Pickle Ball Court suggested for Nellie Park. The association has concerns with this idea since this park is already utilized for other activities.

Catherine Clements, 3224 Cedar St., showed a picture/plaque confirming the creation of Nellie Park. Her relatives worked hard to create this park. At that time African Americans were not allowed to use the other parks. They do not want a pickle ball court in this park. Mayor Williams explained the idea to put a pickle ball court at Nellie Park is no longer in the plans. The town does plan to implement some repairs and beautification but that is all.

Mayor Williams stated a citizen had asked him about long term goals for infrastructure and asked Town Administrator Milie to provide information. Town Administrator Milie explained per the County Engineer, the roads of Thunderbolt are the best in the County. Public Works has completed a road evaluation in correlation with water and sewer lines. Rowland/Tuberson are schedule for resurfacing. The town was to piggy backing with the County's bid process but the vendor has backed out. The next County meeting is the last time they can select a vendor. If they do not, we will bid it out ourselves. Maceo has been identified for the LMEG funding. Town Administrator Milie stated the town working towards combining fundings to get roads that last 20 or so years instead of 5 to 7 years.

Catherine Clements, 3224 Cedar St, stated on their where there was a water line repair on the street it is sinking and has standing water. Town Administrator Milie explained this is a cost recovery from a private resident's vendor to cover the repair.

Council Member Drohan stated working with the County is still a good idea but even though staff has run into issues with the process. Originally, the grant was to be only for Rowland. For \$2000 more, the town will be allowed to resurface both Rowland and Tuberson. The total cost on our own is \$38,000. Saving money on matching for resurfacing of streets can be moved to other areas. This is a complex process and it is slower than all would like but it will save money. Council Member Crenshaw stated the Governor suspended the gas tax agina. This will reduce the funds eligible for grants.

Council Member Lavin asked if there are other infrastructure goals. Town Administrator Milie stated Rowland and Tuberson were the worse that had no other infrastructure needs. Other roads rated poorly need lining or new water and sewer lines.

Mayor Williams thanked everyone involved with Phil in the Park. The community has been flooding staff and Council with positive feedback. The next town event is November 3rd, the kid's movie in the park.

Meridith Allen, 3220 Falligant Ave., state the Community Improvement Association holds there meeting the last Thursday of every month at 7 pm at College Park Baptist Church. Encourage Thunderbolt residents to come and join them. Some of the activities they do are: work with Tara to do outreach events for those with no family and provide school supplies to kids going back to school.

Mayor Williams closed the public hear meeting at 6:30 pm.

REGULAR MEETING

1. Call to order

2. Roll Call by Presiding Officer with Invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

In Attendance is Mayor Dana Wiliams and Council Members: Bethany Skipper-Greer, David Crenshaw, Larry Ward, Ed Drohan, James Lavin and Brooks Barbaree. Staff in attendance: Town Administrator, Bob Milie; Town Attorney, Charlie Barrow, Polie Chief, Sean Clayton; Special Projects Coordinator, Elizabeth Rhodes; Public Works Director, Oscar Crosby; Utilities Clerk, Renee Holmes, Accounts Payable/Utilities Manager, Katina Spaulding; Fire Chief, Andrew Bateman and Clerk of Council, Deatre Denion.

3. Approval of Meeting Agenda

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the agenda. **Council Member Ward made the motion to approve with a second by Council Member Crenshaw. The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:

Minutes of August 9, 2023 and August 29, 2023

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes for August 9, 2023 and August 29, 2023. **Council Member Ward made the motion to approve with meeting minutes with the correction of Larry Ward's last name in the August 29th minutes. Council Member Crenshaw provided the second. The motion passes unanimously.**

5. Presentation:

- a) Proclamation for Patriots Day, September 11, 2023

Mayor Williams read the proclamation.

- b) Resolution for Economic Protections- Shrimp Dumping

Mayor Williams explained shrimping was a thriving economic engine for Thunderbolt in the past. That is not true today. He read a resolution supporting protection of shrimpers from shrimp dumping. Several

local shrimpers came forward to accept the resolution. Mayor Williams stated he has reached out to elected local, state, and federal officials to stop shrimp dumping. Mayor Williams read the resolution.

Paige Morrison, Shrimper Association, thanked all for the resolution. They are working hard to save a way of life. Mayor Williams is the first Mayor in Chatham County to signed the resolution.

c) Simply Savannah Marketing – Social Media Update

Marianne Ganem-Poppell presented a social media update in Thunderbolt. The town's social media accounts started with Blessing of the Fleet, April 2022. The goal was to be town centric. In the first year the organic reach was almost 60,000 followers. It has doubles from 2022 to 2023. The Linked In account was not created until late 2022 and has a slower growth of the other apps. Mayor Williams stated they are getting more feedback from business owners. The more events the town has the more beneficial for the business. Council Member Drohan asked if the social media sites be connected to the new website. Mrs. Ganem-Poppell stated once the website is up and running, they will be. Council Member Ward stated they are doing a great job. Council Member Skipper-Greer asked if there are any age demographics of the followers. Mrs. Ganem-Poppell stated we do have some numbers but she did not bring them tonight.

d) Simply Savannah Marketing – Hurricane Idalia Outreach

Marianne Ganem-Poppell explained the PR they handled during hurricane Idalia. Everyone worked together. They made sure to connected the experts to all outreach. Facebook was the main communication. They did start a linktree account for this event.

Other activities for Hurricane Idalia were discussed. Town Administrator Milie stated staff began working starting Saturday. All departments worked together to prepare. The cost of this hurricane was \$5,200 for overtime and an estimated \$1,000 for miscellaneous expenses.

e) Tompson Park Fountain Presentation

Anna Maria Thomas, Chair of the Tompson Park, spoke of the committee recommendation. There are three concepts. Concept 1: refurbish existing into a fountain again. Concept 2: refurbish existing fountain into a planter. Concept 3: a planter with small water feature. The committee recommendation is concept 2. Town Administrator Milie stated we need council to tell us where to go. Mayor Williams asked if concept 2 have a small water feature in the boat. Several council members do not want potable water in the fountain. Council Member Drohan stated concept 2 would have less expense from maintenance. Council Member Barbaree asked about lighting for nighttime. Mayor Williams thanked the committee and asked Council to think on it for a month and will discuss it in October.

f) STR Report

Ashley Goodrich, consultant, provided an overview on STR in Thunderbolt. She presented data on how many STRs are advertising, between 65 to 71. Note: owner occupied are including in the numbers advertised but are not counted in the capped 70. There are 127 total active STR listing but there are duplicates. The system shows 25 pending listings in compliance/non-compliance. They revenue through the system is \$7,700 registrations collected, \$14,889 taxes collected equaling a total of \$22,589. Next step is to compare with these numbers with finance's numbers. Council Member Crenshaw asked about the ordinance review and change allowing multiple STRs on the same parcel. Town Administrator Milie explained it will be changed in the overall ordinance review. There is no need to do it before since the cap has been met. Council Member Skipper-Greer asked what non-compliance means. Ms. Goodrich stated in the system it means they registration is not confirmed for some reason. She will be looking further into

these listing. Clerk of Council Denion stated the system has had issues and some owners have submitted hard copies and payments to her.

g) Tree Canopy Presentation –

Elizabeth Rhodes, Special Project Coordinator, stated currently the town has a 24% tree canopy. We would like to see an increase by 2% in 20 years. This includes maintaining the current canopy and increase 2% more. Council Member Crenshaw stated there is an oak tree on Bhai Blue that appears to have been struck by lightning. Town Administrator Milie stated that tree is Bhai Blue's tree and they have it slated to be removed. Council Member Crenshaw stated one of the oaks on River Dr. was spliced when they were putting fiber in. He stated Savannah does not allow companies to splice trees, they have to go under the tree.

h) Website Update

Elizabeth Rhodes, Special Project Coordinator, stated this is a quick update. There is one more focus group to go before going live. Ms. Rhodes thanked Council for their feedback.

6. Finance Report:

Shannon Brett, Holland, Bromley, Barnhill & Brett, stated the budget information provided is through August. Everything is on track for the 2023 budget. Over all the town has 71% in revenue. Town expenses are in line at 67%. What is on the horizon is preparing 2024 budget. Ms. Brett stated for next meeting she hopes to have a 5 year trend analysis. Council Member Ward asked if there was an increase in the interest rate for the GA fund. Ms. Brett stated both the GA Fund and United Bank Fund had increases. Council Member Crenshaw asked if there are penalties if funds are removed early. Ms. Brett state there is not, these funds are fluid.

7. Consent Agenda:

- a) Approval of Contract for Organic Recycling Services with Code of Return Compost LLC.
- b) Approval of Contract with Upcycling Glass Recycling for Glass Recycling.
- c) Approval of Alee Shriners Parade Permit and Waiver for November 18, 2023.

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. **Council Member Ward made the motion to approve the consent agenda as written with a second from Council Member Crenshaw. The motion passed unanimously.**

8. Discussion Agenda:

- a) Approval of Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood (GMC) Proposal to Assist with NPDES Phase 1 MS4 Stormwater Compliance Activities & Annual Report.

Clerk of Council Denion explained there was a mistake last month. The activities for 2023 was not included in the multiyear contract approved last month. This only for this year. **Council Member Ward made the motion to approve the contract with a second Council Member Skipper-Greer to accept the approval of the contract. Motion passed unanimously.**

- b) Approval of Iconic Sounds Music Group at 343 Laurel Oak Ln Home Occupation Permit.

Council Member Drohan made the motion to approve the home occupation permit with a second by Council Member Ward. The motion passed unanimously.

- c) Approval of the Roger Lacey Right-of-Way Agreement with CLJ Holdings.

Town Administrator Milie explained Council is voting on the lease agreement as written. If CLJ Holding makes changes the lease will come back for a vote. Council Member Drohan made a motion to table this to receive more information. Council Member Ward seconded the motion. Town Administrator Milie asked for clarification on the information Council Drohan is looking for. Council Member Drohan stated he wants to make sure with CLJ Holdings investing funds for this right-of-way the Town does not find they need it back in a few years. Town Administrator Milie explained CLJ Holdings is very aware the Town can take it back. This lease allows the company to expand. From the information and research done on the Shell Road Corridor, the town will not utilize this right-of-way. Mayor Williams called for the vote. **The motion failed unanimously. Council Member Ward made a motion to accept with the provision the final person reviews and oks the lease. Council Member Drohan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

9. Department Report – Written Reports Submitted

by: Police / Municipal Court / Neighborhood Watch – Sean Clayton, Chief of Police

Chief Clayton had nothing further to add to his report. Town Administrator Milie stated next month they would like to bring forward recognition for Savannah Police Department assistance when Chief Clayton was attacked by a dog. Mayor Williams asked if the dog was recovered. Chief Clayton stated it has not. The owner of the dog's bond was set with the caveat of turning the dog in to Animal Control. The owner is still in jail. Town Administrator Milie praised the officers for stepping up while Chief Clayton has been on limited duty.

Council Member Skipper-Greer asked about if the STR robbery was connected to it being a short term rental. Chief Clayton stated the original theory was it was a set up but after the investigation it showed it was not.

Fire – Fire Chief, Andrew Bateman

Chief Bateman had nothing further to add to his report. Council Member Williams thanked the fire department for their work during the hurricane.

Public Works Department – Oscar Crosby, Public Works Manager

Public Works Director Crosby explained the 6600 gallons used for Tompson Park was due to new planting and to ensure grass is firm for the upcoming event. Chlorides are at 70. Purchase water from Savannah is close to accurate. The city's well house was struck by lightning causing issues with the meter. The billed water is less than the sewer for that reason. The sewer does average 10 million for 31 days. Council Member Crenshaw asked if the irrigation system at Tompson Park would be severed from the potable water when connected to the shallow well. Public Works Director Crosby stated it is required. Council Member Crenshaw stated the system will need to drain in the winter. Town Administrator Milie praised the maintenance of Public Works. Mayor Williams praised Public Works for their work during the hurricane and Phil in the Park.

10. Town Administrator Report: Town Administrator, Bob Milie

Town Administrator Milie went over some highlights from his report. There is no movement on the force main grant.

Mayor Williams had a citizen ask about water way closure and if anyone knew anything about it. Trey Connors, 3311 Bannon Drive, stated DOT is shutting down waterway for seven weeks. Sue DeRosa, 3215 Bannon Dr., stated there was an article in the newspaper and there will be specified times when passage through is allowed.

Council Member Drohan asked about reformulating the Honey Park plan to include a pickle ball court.

11. Legal Report – Town Attorney

No Report

12. Mayor and Council

Council Member Drohan spoke to Town Administrator Milie about using the website for drafting of water & sewer payments and see if there is a savings with this change.

13. Thunderbolt Museum

Anna Maria Thomas announced the museum having a garage sale Sept. 30th from 8 am to 2 pm. She asked all to come out and support them. There will be multi vendors coming in to sell items. If anyone wants to sell anything it is \$25 to rent a table.

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to recess into executive session. **Council Member Ward made the motion with a second from Council Member Crenshaw. The motion passed unanimously.**

14. Executive Session- Mayor requests a motion and a second to recess into executive session for the purpose of Legal, Real Estate and/or Personnel matters.

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to open back into the regular meeting. **Council Member Crenshaw asked for the motion with a second from Council Member Ward.**

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Council Member Skipper made the motion with a second from Council Member Ward. The motion passed unanimously.**

15. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.



Dana Williams, Mayor



Matthew D. Walker, Interim Clerk of Council