



**TOWN OF THUNDERBOLT  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023  
6:00 PM**

**AGENDA HEARING**

**Public has five minutes per person to ask questions or comment on any agenda item.**

- **Mayor Van Johnson was in attendance today.**
  - **Traffick Jam:** For Law Enforcement Entities to speak on human trafficking.
- **Feel better Deatre!**
- **Stella Lavin: 3125 Robertson Ave:** When she went to the P&Z meeting and wanted to make sure the height was being voted on as well as the length. This has been confirmed. She would like to vote with the P&Z committee if possible. Ordinance states no fence should be taller than 6ft.
- **Geneva Golden: 3126 Gilbert St:** February's Park & Recreation and 2022 Budget workshops: Last year the workshops were not publicized. This year how will you post it? It is posted on the website, Savannah Morning News, and social media. Can you use the emergency water cut off notification to notify residents of workshops? No it is only used in emergency.
- **Councilman Drohan:** The formulation of the final numbers on the developmental zones is coming together. We have the gross numbers DPW shared. The only zone out of the 7 zones that will require significant infrastructure development was the one nearest the city of Savannah. There is a lot of development going on in Skidaway so they hope there will be more funding available. If the property owners want to develop this area we can be presented with where to get more funding. Different zoning standpoints may need to be considered. Sidewalks might want to be considered for Shell road. The reason for the study is so the town, planning & zoning, and the citizens can understand the true costs for development.
  - **Mayor:** Being that it is adjacent to Savannah will there be any hurdles?
  - **Charlie Barrow:** No
  - **Councilman Drohan:** There is an existing ROW that is on the plat where a new road into Shell could possibly be developed.
  - **Oscar Crosby:** New funds are being used for a parking lot for Release Marine.
  - **Geneva Golden:** What properties?
  - **Councilman Drohan:** Shell Road and goes through to Colorado towards Skidaway Rd. We will have maps available at a later date.
  - **Mayor:** Please note this is just a study at this time.
  - **Councilman Drohan:** Good reporting with year-end water usage. This is the first time we have not had to purchase excess water from the City of Savannah aside the one line that serves TMI. We came 16 million gallons of water below what we are allowed to take from the Aquaphor. Reasoning? The data suggests the conversation and infrastructure improvements are a big contribution. We were also way under our limit for sewage as well. We are starting to develop a concrete infrastructure plan to have continued success in these areas.
- **Don Hodges: Skidaway Island: Variance Request:** I am a GC. A man bought a property on Mechanics for his antique shop. He needed another building for his stakes. There are no combustibles, no electricity, lots of skylights. They initially wrote in red they wanted a sprinkler system in their building. If a building is smaller than 20,000 square ft it does not generally need a system. He has Andrew go look at it. He suggested to put it on the agenda to consider it. There is no water to supply to the building. With fuse breaks, everything gets covered. The only thing they would use it for is for storage. The building is under 5000ft and is just used for storage. It should not need a sprinkler system. They would like a variance for this property. The building is non-combustible. Please consider granting this request.
  - **Crenshaw & Milie:** The recommendation from staff: (Fire Marshall, fire chief,) Denied. The state might not require it but Thunderbolt does.
  - **Mayor:** This is on the discussion agenda so we will come back to this issue.

## **REGULAR MEETING**

1. **Call to order**
2. **Roll Call by Presiding Officer with Invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Approval of Meeting Agenda**
  - a) Ward Motions to Approve
  - b) Councilman Crenshaw
  - c) Unanimously Approved

4. **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:**

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Minutes of December 14, 2022 and December 21, 2022

- Ward
- Crenshaw
- Unanimously Approved

5. **Presentations:**

a) **Proclamation for National Human Trafficking Prevention**

- Savannah State University
- 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Savannah Traffick Jam
- Diane McCloud: Blue is the color to wear to acknowledge human trafficking. Today is National Human Trafficking Prevention Today which is why I proudly wear blue.
- Van Johnson: Mayor of City of Savannah; This is the first proclamation of the season. We are going to do the city of savannah tomorrow. We recognize human trafficking can happen anywhere and we will do our best to protect our communities.
- Mayor: When you hear the word trafficking you first go to is sex trafficking but in actuality the big trafficking issue right now is labor trafficking. We appreciate you for raising awareness for this special issue.
- The Mayor reads the proclamation.
- Councilman Drohan: I am part of many groups that help identify human trafficking places. It is often very subtle and requires a trained eye to pick up on these types of situations. It might be helpful to bring the hospitals together to see how to more efficiently
- Diane McCloud: She is an attorney that partners with the Coordinational Council that provides training to medical professionals that help them identify victims of human trafficking. They would be more than happy to provide that training to hospitals in the future.

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b) **Introduction to the new Fire Marshall, Richard “Ricky” Griffin**

- Previous Fire Marshall Eric Phillips has now retired.
- Hello Ricky Griffin and Thomas Simmons.
- 23 years working for the city of Savannah
- He has worked on Plans and inspections for 20 + years
- 17 years working with Port Wentworth.
- Before that he installed sprinkler systems.
- Mayor welcomes him in.

c) **Finance Report:**

- Shannon Brett: Executive Summary Packets have been issued. No amendments have been proposed as of yet. Amendments should start around March. Revenues of 6.8 million are 38% of budget and expense line is around 86% of the budget. Everything seems on track as of now. We have accomplished all year end tasks. QS1 has also been closed out. Georgia Fund is a new option for keeping excess cash on deposit. Interest rate is 3.92 as of 12/31/2022. Funds are flexible and

liquidated and brought back into availability. There are a few proposals for the general fund. 11,600 interest generation. We want to keep the funds secure and available while earning the most interest possible. There is a contact with the GA office Shannon is getting comfortable with. Hopefully there will be a better update at next month's meeting.

- We will need to vote on allocating 2-3 million.
- Councilman Ward sets a motion to increase to 3 million to GA fund to get larger interest back.
- Councilman Crenshaw seconds.
- Councilman Lavin wants to know how fast return will be.
  - Milie: This will be quick. It follows the same principal SPLOST does.
- Councilman Lavin: What is the risk?
  - It is guaranteed by the state statutes. It is about 3 days to get everything out. Low risk.
  - No Loss and not market driven
- Councilman Drohan: Equal access to funds?
  - Shannon Brett: Yes
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## 6. Planning & Zoning Public Hearing

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### a. Petitioner: George Merritt

**Request:** Variance for fence location

**Parcel Involved:** 3-0004-05-008

**Location:** 2628 River Dr.

P & Z unanimously denied the request.

- George Merritt is not present at this meeting
- This property located at 2628 River Dr. currently had a fence on their property that is 6ft when it should have been 4ft.
- P&Z told them they should move the fence, apply for a variance, and or cut the fence to the appropriate height. The staff denied their original variance. There is no obstruction view but everything was measured and planned differently from the actual fence installation. There are no fences that are allowed to by 6ft. At 4ft it could have been permissible.
- Dawn Williams: 3120 Hubbard St. Are we going to make them take their fence down?
  - They will have to comply with what has been enforced.
  - Will they be fined?
    - There is a legal process.
- David Crenshaw motions to deny the variance
- Councilman Ward seconds.
- Drohan Discussion: I agree with the motion, however this is one of those properties I would call an unfortunate property. It is at an intersections with lots of traffic. All of us can imagine if we had lights coming through our windows all day. I can understand why they would want a fence. The error comes in when they were planning they should have gotten a variance to begin. They are within their rights to apply for a different type of variance but they broke the rules. They need to comply with their agreement. Was it originally approved facing River Dr.
- Brooks: Their options are to move it back or cut it down. Just checking.
- Charlie Barrow: At the zoning meeting the owner said he was out of town but zoomed in. The contractor was not at the meeting. When there is a final agreement for a permit like this the owner
- Joslyn Bryant: With the intersection being so high does it obstruct traffic vision?
  - No it does not. It has been approved by PD.
- The motion to deny variance has been approved unanimously.

## 7. Discussion Agenda:

- a) Approval for a revision of Erica Davis Catering's alcohol license. The current license is for Beer and Wine. They wish to expand their license to include liquor by the drink. *Staff recommends approval.*

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- **Dr. Drohan** Motions to approve
- **Councilman Ward** seconds
- **Councilman Crenshaw:** Is the location to close to a church?
  - **Milie:** I would recommend for council to approve and double check they are within state legal rights
- **Dr. Drohan** Agrees and Motions to Approve Suggestion
- **Councilman Ward** Seconds
- Motion is Approved Unanimously

b) Approval of 2023 Event Contract with Simply Savannah Marketing. This contract is for six events in 2023. *Staff recommends approval.* page 23 – 24

- Councilman Drohan Motions to Approve
- Councilman Ward Seconds
- Councilman Crenshaw: How much is it? What is the cut off?
  - \$55,000 for the year.
  - The intent to still get events sponsored but right now we have this budgeted. Out of \$55,000 projected expenses would be about \$20,000.
- Councilman Barberee: What are the events?
  - April- Easte Egg hunt
  - April- Earth Day/ Arbor Day
  - July 4<sup>th</sup> Kickball Tournament
  - September 10<sup>th</sup>- Philharmonic Concert
  - October- Kids Movie
  - December- Christmas on the Bluff
- Councilman Skipper
  - Are we doing our own or sponsoring the Legion?
    - They were sponsored by State Farm last year so we are going to try to get them to sponsor us this year. (Vernon Donovan)
    - We will have it at Cesaroni Park
    - We will not do Trunk or Treat since the Legion is already having an event.
- Motion is unanimously voted in favor to approve.

- c) Approval of the purchase of a pump to replace a non-functioning pump at Downing Street from Goforth Williamson, inc. This is sole sourced local company. *Staff recommends approval.* page 25 – 26
- Councilman Ward motions to approve
  - Councilman Drohan Seconds
  - Milie: This pump will replace a pipe from 2005.
  - The motion is approved unanimously.
- d) Approval of variance for Seven Heaven Antiques sprinkler system for storage shed. Seven Heaven Antiques request a waiver on installing a sprinkler system in the storage shed. Due to the flammable materials, *Staff recommends denial.*
- **Chief Bateman:** I went out to look at the property and contacted the fire marshal. He saw all of the antique furniture and the small space. They felt uncomfortable approving this variance.
  - **Milie:** Antiques make me nervous when it comes to fire. There are a ton of things that compact you. This is one of those instances the variance recommendation is not great because the fire
  - **Mayor:** What is the risk of exposure to other properties?
    - It is about 25ft from the property line.
  - **Hodges:** No furniture will be stacked in the storage room. It is more an excess furniture store.
  - **Councilman Lavin:** How will he clean everything?
  - **Hodges:** He will use non-flammable polish to clean furniture. He also has insurance and high dollar items so he is vigilant on not losing anything. The system will be more expensive than what it is worth. And having to install the fuse system will be difficult as well. He never had to have a sprinkler system when dealing with furniture.
  - **Mayor:** Would you mind tabling this issue for a month?
  - **Councilman Crenshaw** motions to table until next month
  - Councilman Drohan seconds
  - **Milie** wants him to not put anything into the building until it does get approved.
  - **Lavin:** has anything been put in there prior to this discussion?
    - **Hodges:** No. We submitted a set of plans when we got the permit. PE had already stamped it but then it came back in red to install a sprinkler system. Hodges was surprised because the space was so small. He was then recommended to present this issue to council.
  - **Charlie Barrow:** Is this a single detached building?
    - Hodges: Yes.
  - **Mayor:** Electricity?
    - Hodges: No
  - **Councilman Crenshaw:** Would like to have a cost proposal for what it would cost to get water into the building and install the system.
  - New Fire Marshall will bring back recommendations for February meeting.
  - Motion is approved unanimously

- e) Discussion to establish a February Workshop for 2023 Goals, Review 2022 Budget, and Parks & Recreation.
  - Would like to have on Weekdays preferably Wednesdays at 7pm.
  - Councilman Skipper motions to approve
  - Councilman Ward Seconds
  - Motions is approved unanimously

8. **Department Report – Written Reports Submitted**

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

**Fire – Fire Chief, Andrew Bateman**

**Public Works Department – Oscar Crosby, Public Works Manager**

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- Police: rocking and rolling for 2023
- Fire:
  - dedication plaque was placed on the library last week.
  - Wrapping up projects at the station
- DPW:
  - A sharp increase in water consumption caused by the frozen pipes.
  - We had 11 call outs during Christmas break for water breaks.
  - Everything has been dying down now.
  - Low water pressure caused by a 2-inch break but we had valves to fix the problem.
  - We are working on getting more valves for 2023.

9. **Town Administrator Report: Town Administrator, Bob Milie**

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- a) Katina, Oscar, and Milie are involved in a coaching session monthly. It is a high intensity leadership training program.
- b) 2022 was a bit of a waiting year but I am excited for 2023. We might be able to loosen the purse strings a bit now that we have secured some funding.
- c) We are eagerly waiting for a timeline for Tuberson and Rowland to be completed. We will keep you updated on that project.
- d) Anna Maria Museum:
  - We are bringing back the chili dinner on February 16<sup>th</sup>. Tickets will be going out to all of the members. If you would like a ticket just stop by the museum. Chili and cornbread to eat. This will be 11-6pm. Order some for your staff! We deliver.
  - We are bringing back the garage sale as well. Please donate your once loved treasures and we will see you there!
  - End of Report 2022 to follow.

10. **Legal Report – Town Attorney**

- a) No Report and no reason to have Executive Session.

11. **Mayor and Council –**

- a) Thank you to EVERYONE for a fantastic year last year. We exceeded a large number of goals and are ready to accomplish even more this year.
- b) **Councilman Lavin:** Thanks for all of the help this year. I look forward to this year.

12. **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.

- a) **Councilman Crenshaw** motions to Adjourn
- b) **Councilman Ward** Seconds
- c) Motion is approved Unanimously

**13. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

  
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Mayor, Dana Williams

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Elizabeth Rhoades