



TOWN OF WHITE SPRINGS
“On the Banks of the Suwannee River”

MINUTES

WHITE SPRINGS TOWN COUNCIL

Regular Council Meeting

Town Hall Council Chambers

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

6:30 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order, Invocation, and Pledge Allegiance to Flag** – Mayor, Anita Rivers called the meeting to order. Town Clerk, Audre’ Ruise led the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 2. Roll Call – All present:**
 - Mayor - Anita Rivers
 - Vice-Mayor - Nicole Williams
 - Council Members – LaRita McCallum, and Mary Berry
 - Town Manager - Vanessa George
 - Utilities Director – Ray Vaughn
 - Town Clerk – Audre’ J. Ruise
 - Administrative Assistant – Cynethia Williams
 - Fire Chief - Kevin Pittman
 - Attorney – Joel Foreman

Absent: Councilmember – Jacqueline Williams

- 3. Additions, Deletions, and/or Amendments to the Agenda** – Mayor Rivers amended the agenda to add A to item 7. New Business with Mr. Leroy Bynder discussing the July 4th Celebration.

4. Citizens from the floor: (*Request form needed - 5min. limit per speaker*) – (Request forms attached)

- a) Karin Griffin – (Stated) The Attorney and Town Manager are not making the right decisions for the Town. They are working to benefit each other. Vanessa was allowed to make her own contract; she cannot make her own contract. The town needs to take notes on how Mr. Koberlein wrote the details on severance pay. Why did the Town Attorney create her own contract and then the council accepted and approved it? There was a citizen who was concerned about her children not having anything to do and the council ignored her. There was also a citizen that wanted to have a water party for the children and the council didn't want to give them the water. Vanessa is manipulating this council and the town. The ordinance on the golf carts are not written to benefit the town or it's citizens.

- b) Joe Griffin – (Stated) Open Government is not apart of this town or the council. It's a "pay me" and I'll do what I want and do what I say mentality. It's a dictatorship with the Town Attorney, Town Manager, and the Town Clerk. The Town Manager is charging high fees for FS119's. (Quoted a court case) The Town Manager and the Town Clerk don't know what to do and the council is ignorant. The council is so ignorant they can't hear the voice of government and the people. Where is my voice and the voice of the people? Nothing happens but what the Town Attorney and the Town Manager want.

- c) Beverly Brazil – (Stated) She passed out pictures she took at the park. I took my grandson to the park. The playground is incomprehensible! There is a big wasp nest there and my grandson was stung by wasps. Thank goodness he is not allergic to the wasps it could have been a very serious and bad situation if he was bitten. The park is filthy, trash is everywhere. Our children have no where to go. This is just wrong for the park to be in this condition and something needs to be done about it!

Town Manager - Vanessa George stated that she is aware of how the park looks. Staff is there weekly mowing lawns, cleaning bathrooms, and what ever else needs to be done. Although she agrees with Mrs. Brazil, but we only have two staff who keeps the parks and everything else in the town in good presentable condition.

Utilities Director – Ray Vaughn stated also that he is aware and that his staff of two diligently works hard each week making the park look presentable and the bathrooms clean. He mentioned that Monday, he had to join the staff because of the condition of the bathroom. They worked 7 hours cleaning up, including up to 10 giant bags of trash and a flat screen tv in the bathroom. He had to pull both staff members from their specific job that day to come to the park and assist in the clean-up. Town Manager George also mentioned that three staff members who keep the entire town cleaned and mowed daily are also the ones who have to assist at the wastewater plant, sewer plant, and where ever else they are needed. When they are pulled to go to another job, the job that were working on doesn't get done until the next day at times. She, Ray, and Mayor Rivers were aware of the park that morning as well. The park was cleaned only 3 days prior to this. She also mentioned that she was told that someone was living in the park and the bathroom therefore, creating the trash and filth in the park daily. We just can't veer away from the scheduled work rotation in fear of nothing ever getting done. She asked for the help of the citizens to help in keeping an eye out for people who are living and even vandalizing the park. We need everyone to help. Call the police if you see something not right at the park. The town will install a metal cage at the door and better lighting, and possibly an infra-red camera.

(see attached photos)

- d) Thomas Brazil – (Stated) – I was in charge of a work crew at a previous job. He had five staff and rotated the shifts to include weekends. Utilities Director Vaughn and Town Manager George mentioned that the town only had two staffers who not only maintain the parks, but they assist with the wastewater and sewer plants when needed, rotating shifts are not feasible for our staff.

5. Consent Docket: None

Approval of Minutes: Council member, LaRita McCallum made the motion and Vice-Mayor Nicole Williams seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Motioned passed 4-0 vote.

May 11, 2021 – Town Hall Meeting

6. Old Business

- a) **Mittauer & Associates (Kellen Lindsey) – Project Change Order #10** – Mr. Lindsey was not able to attend. Utilities Director Ray Vaughn presented change order #10 to the council and explained in detail what the change order represented and why there was a change from the original project details. Councilmember LaRita McCallum made the motion to accept change order #10 and Councilmember Mary Berry seconded. Motion passed 4-0. (see attached)

- b) **Hamilton County 911/Henry Land via conference call – Kenny Hutcherson Memorial Drive** – (Stated) He remembered the past ordinance to rename Suwannee Street to Kenny Hutcherson memorial Drive. He has spoken with many of the businesses and residents felt a burden in having to rename and change all their addresses. It is his recommendation that the street remain the same and issue a ‘honorary street name sign in Kenny Hutcherson’s memory’. The sign would be placed atop the regular sign of Suwannee Street.

Mayor Rivers stated that she thought the ordinance read that the street be an ‘Honary’ designated street and currently there was no ordinance to reference the designation. She asked could there be a resolution written on for the signage?

Attorney Foreman stated that he would recommend the council to create an ordinance to get the community and citizen feedback. He also contacted the state to get a copy of all the filed 2019 ordinances and has not received any correspondence back from the state.

Town Manager George stated the same issue concerning 2020 state filed ordinances. The town has not received any correspondence for the state.

Town Clerk Ruise stated that all the 2021 ordinances have been processed and filed with the state.

7. New Business

- a) **Leroy Bynder – Town July 4th Celebration** – (Stated) He wanted to have a July 4th Celebration for the town, his committee will cover the fees associated with the park and all the food. He had a guest he introduced as one of the sponsors for the event, Mr. Terrence Wolfson.

Mr. Wolfson introduced himself as a Pediatrician and event promoter of RISE Events. He said he would graciously help to sponsor the July 4th event and enlisted the help of the council as well. There would be food, vendors, and bounce houses. He also stated that he has a \$2M liability insurance policy for the event. He mentioned that he would be at the event on Saturday, July 12th too.

Mayor Rivers, Town Manager George, or Utilities Director Vaughn were not aware of the event and asked who was having the event? Mr. Wolfson said it was Ashley Bryant having an event for the children. Mayor Rivers asked Ms. Bryant who she had spoken to about having the event. Vice-Mayor Williams stated that she had spoken to Ms. Bryant and apologized to the council for giving her information that she thought was correct. Mayor Rivers then stated that all activities need to be brought before the council for approval through the Special Events Committee. The committee will then bring it before the council for approval. Mayor Rivers also stated that she saw a post on FB about the event and was not aware of it.

Mayor Rivers was fine with the July 4th event and asked if the Special Events Committee could meet to discuss the details? Town Manager George asked if the committee would plan the meeting tonight? Councilmember McCallum interjected the need for the community to get involved with the town's special events to become aware of what's going on in the town and work together. She suggested that there be a community meeting with the Special Events Committee in the near future. She then suggested a meeting the following Thursday, June 10th at 6p, or Monday, June 14th at 6p with the town putting out the announcement to the community tomorrow. (got a call from Councilmember McCallum the following day to cancel the meeting until a later date, she has a conflict with the date) Town Clerk Ruise cancelled the announcement.

Fire Chief Pittman – (Stated) The Fire Department would like to support the event with various games for the youth, Old Fashion Day, Silent Auction, Cake Walk, and the Fire Truck spraying water on the youth. He had contacted Stephen Foster for the stage and it is not available. He also mentioned to have possible Fireworks that evening.

Vice-Mayor Williams then apologized once again to the council and the community about the misunderstanding with Ms. Bryant and made the motion to allow Ms. Bryant to have her event on Saturday, June 12th since she had scheduled per her conversation with her. Councilmember McCallum seconded. Motion passed 3-1 with Mayor Rivers voting ‘Nay’.

8. Departmental/Administrative Comments

a) **Public** – None

b) **Departments** – None

c) **Council** – Mayor Rivers challenged each person present at the meeting to bring at least one person with them at the next meeting on July 13th. Let’s unify and stop bashing each other and find out the real reason things in our town are the way that they are. In Lake City citizens have to pay fees at various parks and city owned buildings. We have an open door policy and we are here for the community and every citizen. Councilmember McCallum stated again to encourage everyone to come to the special events committee meeting.

Adjourned at 8:25pm

IF A PERSON DECIDES TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE TOWN COUNCIL, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING, THAT PERSON WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND FOR PURPOSE THAT PERSON MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) PERSONS NEEDING SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS TO PARTICPATE IN THE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS SHOULD CONTACT THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE NOT LATER THAN THREE DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

Town Manager,

Town Clerk, or Designee

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