

The special called meeting of the City Council of the City of Newnan, Georgia was held on Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 5:30pm in the Richard A. Bolin Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor Keith Brady presiding.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brady called the meeting to order and delivered the invocation.

PRESENT

Mayor Keith Brady: Council members present: Rhodes Shell, George Alexander; Cynthia E. Jenkins, Ray DuBose, Paul Guillaume and Dustin Koritko. Also present: City Manager, Cleatus Phillips; City Clerk, Megan Shea; Assistant City Manager, Hasco Craver and City Attorney, Brad Sears

DISCUSSION REGARDING REVIEW OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

City Manager explained that this a follow up from an update given at the April 12th City Council meeting. The original resolution that was passed referred to policies, procedures and practices. Mr. Phillips gave a brief definition of policies and procedures to help differentiate between them. Policies are reviewed and adopted by Council, such as ordinances, policy or code. Procedures are established by management to implement the policies adopted by Council.

Some of the significant policies adopted by Council are the Personnel policy, Financial policy, facility use policy and movie filming policy. Procedures implemented by management include operating procedures in the police department, fire department, finance, human resources, municipal court, Carnegie and leisure services. There are many departments that do not have operating procedures but rather use work orders, assignments or manufacturer specifications.

Councilman Alexander asked about the police procedures and what ones are state related? Chief Blankenship explained that they do have a code book set by the state and that gets updated every year. The NPD is state certified so there are operating procedures mandated from the state that they have to stay on top of as well. When those policy changes are received there is a program used to push that out to all officers and they have to sign off on it.

Councilwoman Jenkins asked if any outside consultants were used in developing any of the department's procedures? City Manager stated no, other than ones that Council may have had a hand in but no professional consultant input. Chief Blankenship stated that they use other agencies around the state to get input such as the Georgia Police Accreditation Coalition (GPAC) and Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police.

Councilwoman Jenkins asked about citizen input? She stated that this all started with citizens asking for input, to get information and have better communication. The intent is

not to make vast changes but about having citizens see a level of transparency, accountability and understanding. How are we addressing citizens' concerns and complaints, how do we handle that? Mayor Brady stated if someone has an issue with one of the departments there is a process. City Manager stated he feels we are super responsive to any type of complaint or inquiry.

Councilwoman Jenkins explained that she thinks there should be a review of processes regarding citizen interaction and how they make complaints or input into City operations. Councilman Alexander said that when a citizen reaches out to him with an issue he contacts the City Manager or Assistant City Manager to help and that's the procedure. Councilman Guillaume expressed concern of citizens having input on things such as police procedures. This could cause some serious issues and not be beneficial.

City Manager explained that citizens have several ways in which they can contact the City and make a complaint such as the website, email or in person.

Councilwoman Jenkins said that Chief Blankenship sat down this week with her neighborhood association to discuss things that are being implemented. She would not have known about these things if they didn't have the conversation. She expressed that while they are doing great things there should be some sort of citizen input on how they are dealt with by their city. Councilman Guillaume commented that the interaction with the PD and Councilwoman Jenkins neighborhood is good, healthy interaction and allows people to get to know the PD.

There was a discussion regarding citizen complaints and citizen engagement. Citizens are always welcome to attend City Council meetings and voice issues or concerns. Chief Blankenship has implemented having the police officers when they are out patrolling chat with the citizens and engage more. Councilman Koritko asked if other public facing departments would be willing to go out and engage with the public in that same manner? He questioned if the issue is that citizens want input or do they just want the interaction to get to know the City better? He suggested that maybe the public facing policies can be available on the website as well in the interest of transparency.

The responsibilities of Council members to the citizens was discussed. Many councilmembers stated that when there is an issue or complaint it should be brought to the City Manager and Mayor Brady explained that is per the City Charter.

City Manager stated that he supports citizen engagement 100%. Staff has a lot of public interaction and engagement on a daily basis. We can definitely go out and do that more and get feedback. He stated that Chief Blankenship has done a great job in his first year as chief. The police department has made a lot of improvements in the last 10-12 years and now Chief Blankenship is working to raise the standards to another level.

The previous resolution adopted in June 2020 was discussed and Assistant City Manager gave an overview again of what happened after that and how things stalled. Councilman Koritko asked if there were any other consulting firms willing to take on the project?

CITY OF NEWNAN, GEORGIA
SPECIAL CALLED WORK SESSION

MAY 24, 2022

Assistant City Manager said there may be but staff needs direction from Council to reignite that process. Councilwoman Jenkins stated her wish to finish this process.

Motion made by Councilwoman Jenkins to continue with the resolution executed in June 2020 and find a replacement for Merris Management and continue the process.

Motion died for lack of second.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Shell, seconded by Councilman Koritko to adjourn the meeting at 6:21PM

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

Megan Shea, City Clerk

Keith Brady, Mayor