

REGULAR MEETING OF  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
MARCH 9, 2021

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The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council was called to order by Mayor Doug Cheek.

Present were Jerry Payne, James Dumas, Cliff Hill, and David Syfan, Attorney.

The invocation was given by Jerry Payne.

The pledge to the flag was led by Mayor Doug Cheek.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved. (3-0)

**AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA – JULIE KING**

- James Dumas requested making an amendment to the agenda to allow Ms. Julie King to speak first. Ms. King thanked the Mayor and council for allowing her to be added on the agenda at such late notice. Her first concern was the SPLOST projects. Mayor Cheek stated that they are expecting approximately one million dollars in SPLOST funds. Projects are then chosen for the next five years. Ms. King asked how the projects are chosen. Mayor Cheek stated that they have been discussed for several months. James Dumas stated that the list is based on the needs of the town, such as a new fire truck, new shop, etc. The SPLOST money is allocated to certain projects and cannot be used for anything else. Ms. King asked how the amount of money the town gets is determined. Jerry Payne stated that it is determined by population. Ms. King asked if that is the case then the more people who move into the town the greater the town's SPLOST funds will be. Town Attorney stated that is not always the case. If Banks County has a greater increase (percentage) in population the town could have a smaller percentage. It is not always as straight forward as just increase in Homer's population growth. Mr. Dumas stated that the amount received was based on the information from the 2010 census. Ms. King asked why it wasn't based on the information from the 2020 census since that information has already been released. Mr. Syfan explained that the 2020 census information has not been given to the state. The population numbers have not been given to calculate the congressional districts which will be first priority. Numbers will be given for the town at some time after that. Ms. King stated that her concern is not the SPLOST money but that the Chimney Oaks residents are increasing the SPLOST funds. She is concerned about the voting representation. The town has been divided up into three voting districts. There were several representatives from districts three in attendance at the meeting. Ms. King does not agree that district three should only have one city council member. She would like to propose that there are three districts with one elected official from each district, two at large, and the mayor at large. Mr. Syfan explained that the state reapportionment office drew up the council districts. He also stated that the reapportionment office has to approve any redistricting done by the city, therefore, instead of the mayor and council drawing up the districts they asked the state reapportionment office to draw them up. He explained that the districts have to have within 5% population of each other. District 1 and 2 have double the population of district 3 which is why the districts are set up the way they are. After the data from the 2020 census is received the existing districts will be reevaluated but this will be after the November 2021 election. The new redistricting will be in effect for the election in 2023. The next time the districts will be reevaluated is after the 2030 census. Mayor Cheek stated that the discussion regarding the districts started in 2018 and if there were any questions they should have been addressed at that time. Ms. King once again proposed that the mayor and council take 60 days and reconsider the voting map she would like to propose that there are three districts with one elected official from each district, two at large,

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and the mayor at large. Mr. Syfan stated that they are not legally capable of doing that. The districts will be reevaluated when the 2020 census data is received. Ms. King asked the mayor and council if they would reconsider the voting districts at this time. Mayor Cheek answered no. Mr. Syfan stated that the districts will be reevaluated in accordance with the 2020 census when that data is received.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **Mayor and Council salary home rule ordinance**  
Attorney David Syfan discussed the Mayor and Council salary home rule ordinance. Jerry Payne made a motion to approve the abovementioned ordinance. The motion was seconded by Cliff Hill and approved. (3-0)
- **Resolution Face Coverings in property owned or leased**  
This will still be enforced until further notice.
- **Ordinance use of mask or face coverings in public during COVID-19 outbreak**  
Motion was made by James Dumas to take this item off the table and drop it from future agendas. Motion was seconded by Cliff Hill and approved. (3-0)
- **Roundabout**  
Discussed roundabout at the intersection of Historic Homer Highway, Hwy 98, Athens St, and Evans St. Mayor and council have not seen the new plans. Property owners have not been notified at this time. GDOT has recommended the roundabout because of the number of wrecks that have occurred at this intersection. Mayor Cheek stated that they would meet with the GDOT regarding the plans. No decisions were made.
- **Bridge update**  
Cliff Hill gave an update on the Hudson River bridge. The bridge will possibly be closed for rebuild. Brad Day asked there were any plans for changing the bridge at Highway 51. Mr. Hill stated that nobody knew of any changes for that bridge the last time it was discussed.  
Jim Pritchard, owner Chimney Oaks Golf Course, discussed the plans and for a direct cut across at 51 and a couple of traffic circles. He stated that they need a public partner in order to get the LMIG money for the project. Brad Day is already in the process of working on this project. He stated that they would also like for Representative Chris Erwin to attend a GDOT meeting with them. They are also working on preliminary engineering for the roundabouts on Scales Creek Road. One roundabout will be at Classic Overlook and one at the Golf Course main entrance. James Dumas asked if there were any thoughts regarding a three-way stop at Classic Overlook. Mr. Pritchard stated that would definitely be helpful in that area. Mr. Dumas stated that a three way stop at Classic Overlook would be beneficial as a short term fix. Jerry Payne asked what the process would be to install rumble strips in that area. Mr. Hill stated that there would have to be a public hearing informing the public of traffic changes. Mike Acton stated that he thought people would just run through a three way stop. Mr. Pritchard stated the rumble strips and athree way stop would be an upgrade to the safety of Scales Creek Road. Mr. Hill stated that caution lights might also work for that area. That would be something that the town could install since it is a town street. John Pittard, Chimney Oaks resident, asked about speed bumps being installed there since rumble strips would cause a loud noise. He has known speed bumps to be very effective in another town. Mr. Hill stated those could be installed through LMIG.  
Mr. Dumas discussed a three way stop on McCoy Bridge Road at Hidden Lakes subdivision. No decisions were made.

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- **Council terms**

Jerry Payne and David Dunson will serve two year(2)terms. Sandra Garrison and Cliff Hill will serve four year (4) terms. James Dumas will serve 4 year term.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Items for next SPLOST Funding request**

Mayor Cheek stated a new fire truck (water tanker with a pump) is needed. The cost of truck and equipment will be approximately \$525,000.00.

New waterlines and sewer (feasibility study) are needed.

New shop building is needed.

- **New Street Names**

Names chosen by Banks County Golf for two new roads at Chimney Oaks Golf where Magnolia Place, Purple Leaf Place, Fairway Lane and Camellia Lane. All the names have been approved by the EMA director. Motion was made by Jerry Payne to name the roads as follows: Fairway Lane will come off Scales Creek Road and Magnolia Place will come off of Fairway Lane and go to the townhomes. Motion was seconded by Cliff Hill and approved. (3-0)

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Committee members**

James Dumas made the motion to appoint Rick Billingslea, John Pittard, and Craig McCrackin to the Downtown Development Authority Board. Motion was seconded by Jerry Payne and approved. (3-0)

The new members will be replacing Bo Dean, David Carithers, and Brent Nicholson on the board.

- **Tank Removal**

Mr. Hill stated that the old fuel tanks were removed today. Waiting on more information regarding any contamination, etc.

Next work session April 6, 2021

**Respectfully submitted by Tracey King, Assistant Clerk**

**\*\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*\***

Correction to minutes at meeting 04-13-2021 Council terms District 1 Post 1 Jerry Payne 2 year term, District 1 Post 2 Cliff Hill 4 year term, District 2 Post 1 David Dunson 2 year term, district 2 post 2 Sandra Garrison 4 year term.

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