

**CITY OF HELEN  
COMMISSION MEETING  
DECEMBER 08, 2020  
10:00 A.M.  
AGENDA**

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR STEVE FOWLER
2. ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK MARILYN CHASTAIN
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 10, 2020
6. ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
  - A. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PLAQUES
  - B. UPDATE FROM CITY MANAGER ON CURRENT PROJECTS
  - C. FINANCIAL REPORT
  - D. DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYEE SALARY INCREASES
  - E. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF ALCOHOL LICENSE RENEWALS
  - F. DISCUSSION OF SETTING THE 2021 QUALIFYING FEE FOR COMMISSION SEATS
  - G. DISCUSSION OF SETTING COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND TIMES FOR 2021
  - H. DISCUSSION OF \$1,000.00 CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THE GRANT BEING APPLIED FOR BY THE WHITE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FROM THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION TO FUND AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE COUNTY
  - I. DISCUSSION OF PAYMENT FOR FALL AND CHRISTMAS DECORATING TO DONA K BURKE AND DISCUSSION FOR APPROVAL FOR 2021 DECORATING
7. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC
8. HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT
9. HELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY REPORT

10. POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT
  - A. DISCUSSION OF PURCHASE/UPDATING CAMERA SYSTEM FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT
11. FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT
12. PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT
13. BUILDING AND ZONING OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT
  - A. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF A PHOTOGRAPHY BENCH IN FRONT OF BUILDING AT 63 CHATTAHOOCHEE STRASSE
14. PURCHASES AND BIDS
  - A. CONSIDERATION TO PURCHASE 875 MODLE 520M SMART POINT RADIO READ DEVICES FOR METER CHANGE OUT PROJECT
15. ORDINANCES
16. RESOLUTIONS
17. DISCUSSION OF WATER RATE STUDY AND PROJECT FINANCING
18. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS
19. ADJOURNMENT

**THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED DECEMBER 4, 2020 @ 11:45 A.M.  
THE MEETING AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND IS NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE  
CITY OF HELEN COMMISSION AT THE COMMISSION MEETING STATED HEREIN.**

**CITY OF HELEN  
COMMISSION MEETING  
DECEMBER 8, 2020  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Helen City Commission met on Tuesday December 8, 2020 in the Commission Chambers at Helen City Hall with Mayor Steve Fowler calling the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. City Clerk Marilyn Chastain called the roll and attending were Commissioner Jeff Ash, Commissioner Geneva Elwell, Mayor Steve Fowler, Commissioner Lee Landress Absent was Commissioner Fred Garmon.

Also attending were Finance Officer Mona Wood, City Manager Jerry Elkins, City Attorney Carl Free, City Clerk Marilyn Chastain, Police Chief Brian Stephens, Fire Chief Jody Prickett, Public Works Assistant Director Jack Morgan, Building & Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 10, 2020;** Motion to approve made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS**

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PLAQUES;** City Manager Jerry Elkins recognized and awarded plaques to Building & Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland for 5 years of service, also Fire Chief Jody Prickett for 5 years of service, Mirinda Dispain was congratulated and recognized for achieving her Municipal Clerks certification, Mayor Steve Fowler was given a plaque and recognized for his term as Mayor for 2020.

**UPDATE FROM CITY MANAGER ON CURRENT PROJECTS;** Fletcher Holliday of EMI gave a brief update stating that the concrete water tank still has problems filling up and believes the hydraulics may be the problem but is still trying to determine, that the Hex Strass design plans have been submitted to EPD and that the Innsbruck water tank that was scheduled to start this month was postponed until next year by the construction company.

**FINANCIAL REPORT;** Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Finance Officer Mona Wood was present and gave a verbal report. She also stated that all the information required by the Hotel/Motel audit company had been given and results should be given toward the end of December or first of January.

**DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYEE SALARY INCREASES;** Motion to approve a 4% merit increase and a 1.3% COLA increase to all employees to include City Manager Jerry Elkins beginning December 30, 2020 made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Geneva Elwell. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

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DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF ALCOHOL LICENSE RENEWALS; Motion to approve all License Renewals made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

DISCUSSION OF SETTING THE 2021 QUALIFYING FEE FOR COMMISSION SEATS; Motion to keep the Qualifying fee set at \$35.00 and have the Qualifying period for 5 days for 2021 made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

DISCUSSION OF SETTING COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND TIMES FOR 2021; Motion to change the Commission Meeting day to the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. made by Commissioner Geneva Elwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to change the Planning Design and Review meeting days to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. each month made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

DISCUSSION OF \$1,000.00 CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THE GRANT BEING APPLIED FOR BY THE WHITE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FROM THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION TO FUND AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE COUNTY; Motion to approve made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

DISCUSSION OF PAYMENT FOR FALL AND CHRISTMAS DECORATING TO DONA K BURKE AND DISCUSSION FOR APPROVAL FOR 2021 DECORATING; Motion to approve payment of \$15,000.00 to Dona K Burke for the 2020 decorating and approval for her to continue decorating for 2021 made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Geneva Elwell. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC; None

HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT; Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Director Jerry Brown was present and gave a verbal report.

HELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY REPORT; No written report. Director Renee Green was present and stated she hopes 2021 will be back to normal.

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POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT; Report included as an integral part of the minutes. Police Chief Brian Stephens was present and gave a verbal report.

DISCUSSION OF PURCHASE/UPDATING CAMERA SYSTEM; Chief Brian Stephens informed the Commission that by purchasing the new system it would drastically reduce the time required to pull reports and video of citations/investigations. Motion to approve the camera system at a cost of \$21,582.00 made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Geneva Elwell. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT; Report included as an integral part of the minutes. Fire Chief Jody Prickett was present and gave a verbal report.

PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT; Report given by Assistant Public Works Director Jack Morgan.

BUILDING AND ZONING OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT; Report included as an integral part of the minutes. Building and Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland was present and gave a verbal report.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF A PHOTOGRAPHY BENCH IN FRONT OF BUILDING AT 63 CHATTAHOOCHEE STRASSE; Motion to decline the request made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Geneva Elwell. Motion to decline approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

**PURCHASES AND BIDS**

CONSIDERATION TO PURCHASE 875 MODLE 520M SMART POINT RADIO READ DEVICES FOR METER CHANGE OUT PROJECT; Discussion of purchasing the radio read devices from Newton County from an overstock which would save several thousand dollars. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

ORDINANCES; None

RESOLUTIONS; None

DISCUSSION OF WATER RATE STUDY AND PROJECT FINANCING; Motion to approve projects in Year 1- Hex Strasse Well \$215,000.00, Chattahoochee River Sewer Line \$275,000.00, Ground Water Development \$25,000.00, Meter Replacement \$579,000.00,

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Solids Removal WWTF \$395,000.00, Year 2- Main Lift Station \$1,200,000.00, Year-3 Well #11 (Lenzen Property Well) \$477,000.00 and have EMI go ahead and apply for Grants made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

City Manager Jerry Elkins asked Deputy Clerk Mirinda Dispain to summarize the water rate study she had compiled. She explained that cities similar to Helen have rates that are comparable or more than Helen's. Mayor Steve Fowler suggested to wait until the Audit is complete and look at estimated cost of repairs before making a rate increase decision.

CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS; Commissioner Geneva Elwell stated that the Christmas tree lighting went well. Mayor Steve Fowler stated he appreciates all the help that went into decorating.

ADJOURNMENT; Motion to adjourn at 11:36 a.m. made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

**RESPECTFULLY PREPARED BY CITY CLERK MARILYN CHASTAIN**

