

**CITY OF HELEN
COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 15, 2015
3:00 P.M.
AGENDA**

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR DONA K BURKE
2. ROLL CALL BY DEPUTY CLERK MIRINDA DISPAIN
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 2015
6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC
7. ALPINE HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT
8. HELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY REPORT
9. ADMINISTRATIVE
 - A. PERSONNEL
 - B. UPDATE ON FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS
10. POLICE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
11. FIRE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
12. PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER MONTHLY REPORT
 - A. DISCUSSION OF SIGNAGE FOR RIVERSIDE PARK.
13. BUILDING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
14. PURCHASES AND BIDS
15. ORDINANCES; 15-08-01; AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HELEN, GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE OFFICIAL CODE OF THE CITY OF HELEN, GEORGIA, BY THE REPEAL OF THE CURRENT CHAPTER 68; TAXICABS FOR HIRE; AND ITS REPLACEMENT WITH A NEW CHAPTER 68; MOTOR VEHICLES FOR HIRE; IN ORDER TO REFLECT IN THE HELEN MUNICIPAL CODE THOSE CHANGES IN STATE LAW IMPLEMENTED BY THE GEORGIA LEGISLATURE

16. RESOLUTIONS

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL

18. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS

19. ADJOURNMENT

THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED SEPTEMBER 10, 2015 @ 4:00 P.M.

**CITY OF HELEN
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SEPTEMBER 15, 2015
MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Helen City Commission met on Tuesday September 15, 2015 in the Commission Chambers at Helen City Hall with Mayor Dona K Burke calling the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Deputy Clerk Mirinda Dispain called the roll and the following were present: Commissioner Fred Garmon, Commissioner Helen Wilkins, Mayor Dona K Burke, Commissioner Judy Holloway, and Commissioner Jeff Ash.

Also attending were City Manager Jerry Elkins, City Attorney Carl Free, Deputy Clerk Mirinda Dispain, Police Chief Brian Stephens, Fire Chief Jody Prickett, and Building & Zoning Director Larry Krul.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was given.

Approval of Agenda: Motion to Amend the Agenda by Adding Item 9-C - Discussion for approval of removal of three pine trees and grinding the stumps in Unicoi Hill Park, and changing Item 17 to read Executive Session for Personnel and Litigation was made by Commissioner Helen Wilkins; 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present. Commissioner Jeff Ash made the motion to approve the agenda; 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

Approval of Minutes from September 1, 2015: Motion to approve minutes made by Commissioner Helen Wilkins; 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

Petitions and Communications from the Public: There was no comments from the public.

Alpine Helen/White County CVB Monthly Report: Jerry Brown updated the Commission. Visitors to the Welcome Center were up 400 over August of last year, bringing the year-to-date total visitors to 595,000. There have been a total of 77,000 brochures sent out. The website had 84,000 visitors during the month of August. He discussed conventions and meetings he had attended, as well as areas of advertisements.

Helen Chamber Of Commerce Monthly Report: No report was given.

Personnel and Update on Fire Department Operations: City Manager Jerry Elkins introduced the new Fire Chief Jody Prickett to the Commission. Mr. Elkins updated the Commission on the improvements to the Fire Department. Fire trucks were being repaired, inspected, and certified. Three part-time firefighters had been hired. He thanked Public Safety Director David Murphy and Chief Norman Alexander from White County for the help they had extended to Helen.

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Discussion for Approval of the Removal of Three Pine Trees and Grinding the Stumps in Unicoi Hill Park: City Manager Jerry Elkins explained there were three pine trees in Unicoi Hill Park which needed to be professionally removed. The location was between the gazebo and the last building. Commissioner Jeff Ash made the a motion to authorize the City Manager to use the lowest bid to removal of three designated pine trees. 2nd by Commissioner Judy Holloway. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

Mr. Elkins then said the City had the opportunity to apply for a Roadside Enhancement Grant. He would like to obtain the grant to improve the appearance of the roadside at the entrance of the City on the south side by the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The cost to obtain the necessary paperwork for the grant would be approximately \$2,000. Commissioner Jeff Ash made the motion to authorize the City Manager to file a grant request for roadside enhancement to be used on the right side of the road as you enter the south side of the City. 2nd by Commissioner Helen Wilkins. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

Police Department Operations: Chief Stephens gave the monthly report of the Police Department. He said the department had received a grant for more bullet-proof vest. There was discussion regarding the amount of alarm calls they were receiving. Mayor Dona K. Burke asked Attorney Carl Free to draft an ordinance imposing fines for excessive false alarm calls to the emergency system (911). Chief Stephens said he needed one more full-time officer to complete his staff.

Fire Department Operations: Chief Prickett stated he had only taken two calls since he had started with Helen. He would give a full report next month.

Public Works, Water And Waste Water Operations: No report was given.

There was discussion about the Riverside Park. Signage was being determined. The bench positioning was awaiting the approval of EPD.

Building And Zoning Department Operations: Director Larry Krul stated the Holiday Inn had obtained plumbing permits and would be getting their electrical permits next. The colors for the Red Roof Inn were approved. The abandoned property (formerly an inn) was discussed regarding its safety. Mayor Burke asked the City Manager to talk with White County concerning it since the property was not within the City limits. Mr. Krul discussed the safety of the Hofbrau Riverfront Hotel. There has been no fire alarm system for three years, and the sprinkler system did not have enough water for it to

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work properly. The rooms over the Hofbrauhaus Restaurant were also discussed. They were not to be rented until they could pass an inspection and obtain an Occupational Tax Certificate. Attention was then turned to the cobblestone alley in the downtown area. The owners of the Southwestern Outpost Gift Shop and Home Décor was restoring the alley by freshening up the artwork and adding more to the area. The back steps would be refurbished and landscaping added to make the area more attractive.

Purchases and Bids: None

Ordinances: 15-08-01; AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HELEN, GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE OFFICIAL CODE OF THE CITY OF HELEN, GEORGIA, BY THE REPEAL OF THE CURRENT CHAPTER 68; TAXICABS FOR HIRE; AND ITS REPLACEMENT WITH A NEW CHAPTER 68; MOTOR VEHICLES FOR HIRE; IN ORDER TO REFLECT IN THE HELEN MUNICIPAL CODE THOSE CHANGES IN STATE LAW IMPLEMENTED BY THE GEORGIA LEGISLATURE: Commissioner Helen Wilkins made the motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 15-08-01. 2nd by Commissioner Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

Resolutions: None

Executive Session to Discuss Personnel and Litigation: Commissioner Helen Wilkins made the motion to go into Executive Session at 3:41 p.m. 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present. Commissioner Jeff Ash made the motion to come out of Executive Session at 4:12 p.m. 2nd by Commissioner Judy Holloway. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

City Commission Comments: Commissioner Jeff Ash made the motion for the Fire Department to have full-time coverage 24/7 365 days a year, to approve provision of an additional \$60,000 to the Fire Department's budget, plus any associated taxes and related expenses to outfit personnel to be administered by the City Manager. This would include 2 full-time employees and the remainder of the time to be filled with part-time employees. 2nd by Commissioner Judy Holloway. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present. Commissioner Ash said the department would be allowed two full-time firefighters, totaling 4160 hours a year and part-time firefighters to fill the other 4600 hours necessary for the coverage.

Commissioner Wilkins reminded everyone of the Veterans' Cookout for September 22 from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

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Motion to Adjourn at 4:20 p.m. was made by Commissioner Fred Garmon. 2nd by Commissioner Helen Wilkins. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission present.

RESPECTFULLY PREPARED BY DUPUTY CLERK MIRINDA DISPAIN