

**CITY OF HELEN
COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 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 JANUARY 14, 2020
6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC
7. HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT
8. HELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY REPORT
9. ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
 - A. UPDATE FROM CITY MANAGER ON CURRENT PROJECTS
 - B. HELEN ROTARY CLUB TO DISCUSS ALLOWING PARKING OF AUTO TO BE RAFFELED IN THE MARKET PLATZ AREA
 - C. FINANCIAL REPORT
 - D. CONSIDERATION FOR APPROVAL OF A NON-PROFIT SPECIAL EVENT LICENSE FOR UNITED WAY OF WHITE COUNTY, INC. FOR APRIL 14, 2020 IN CONJUNCTION WITH FUND RAISING EVENT AT 8100 SOUTH MAIN STREET, HELEN, GA 30545 (HOLIDAY INN)
 - E. DISCUSSION OF ADDING ADDITIONAL ROUTES FOR HORSE CARRIAGES
 - F. DISCUSSION OF NOISE ORDINANCE REGARDING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES
10. POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS
11. FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS
12. PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER OPERATIONS

13. BUILDING AND ZONING OPERATIONS
14. PURCHASES AND BIDS
15. ORDINANCES
16. RESOLUTIONS
17. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PROPERTY ACQUISITION
18. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS
19. ADJOURNMENT

**THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED FEBRUARY 7, 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
FEBRUARY 11, 2020
MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Helen City Commission met on Tuesday February 11, 2020 in the Commission Chambers at Helen City Hall with Mayor Steve Fowler calling the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Attending were Commissioner Jeff Ash, Commissioner Geneva Elwell, Mayor Steve Fowler, Commissioner Lee Landress, and Commissioner Fred Garmon.

Also attending were Finance Officer Mona Wood, City Manager Jerry Elkins, City Attorney Carl Free, City Clerk Marilyn Chastain, Police Captain Mark Harris, Fire Chief Jody Prickett, Building & Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland. Absent was Public Works Director Ross Hewell.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

APPROVAL OF AGENDA; Motion to approve made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM January 14, 2020; Motion to approve made by Commissioner Fred Garmon, 2nd by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

City Manager congratulated and presented City Clerk Marilyn Chastain with her Certification Plaque for achieving her Level 1 Finance officer certification from the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute, and congratulated her on being appointed as District 2 Director for the Georgia Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers Association.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT; Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Director Jerry Brown was absent.

HELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY REPORT; Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Director Renee Green was present and gave a verbal report and an update on upcoming events.

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

UPDATE FROM CITY MANAGER ON CURRENT PROJECTS; City Manager Jerry Elkins stated that the new well project on the property recently purchased is waiting on approval and requirements for use from EPD, that the materials had been delivered for repairs on the water tank, that there is a meeting planned for Thursday morning with DOT to discuss the flooding on main street, and that the playground equipment has been

**COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2020
MINUTES OF MEETING
PAGE 2**

installed at Riverside park. Mayor Steve Fowler asked City Manager Jerry Elkins to inquire on the cost of additional swings for older children.

HELEN ROTARY CLUB TO DISCUSS ALLOWING PARKING OF AUTO TO BE RAFFLED IN THE MARKET PLATZ AREA; A member from the Helen Rotary club was present and asked if the car to be raffled could again be parked in the Market Platz and for additional length of time in order to sell more tickets. He explained that money raised was used to help with local charities like the White Christmas, Turkey in a box at Thanksgiving, abused children and art classes for handicap children. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2nd by Commissioner Geneva Elwell. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

FINANCIAL REPORT; City Manager Jerry Elkins stated everything is going well that compared to last year the general fund is up \$420,000 more than has been paid out, the water/wastewater fund is up \$180,000, sales tax is up \$56,000 and hotel/motel tax up \$43,045. He stated that GMA is looking into why cities are receiving less in title advalorem taxes than in previous years.

City Manager Jerry Elkins stated that Public Works Director Ross Hewell is continuing to improve after his surgery but does not yet know when he will be released to come back to work, also that Police Chief Brian Stephens had surgery yesterday and is doing well, and hopefully will be back at work in 2 to 3 weeks.

Mayor Steve Fowler stated hotel/motel tax is up 8%, SPLOST is up 26% with the new SPLOST starting in October, and things seem to be on the upswing, but wants to prepare in the event the economy takes a turn. City Manager Jerry Elkins stated when times did turn bad several years ago that the City had to lay off 25% of its employees.

CONSIDERATION FOR APPROVAL OF A NON-PROFIT SPECIAL EVENT LICENSE FOR UNITED WAY OF WHITE COUNTY, INC. FOR APRIL 14, 2020 IN CONJUNCTION WITH FUND RAISING EVENT AT 8100 SOUTH MAIN STREET, HELEN, GA 30545 (HOLIDAY INN); Attorney Carl Free stated that he had been appointed Chairman of the event several years ago and the event has been at the Holiday Inn for several years as well, but since they do not have an alcohol license the event does have to be approved by the Commission, but that Bigg Daddy's would be serving the food and alcohol and does have a license. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

DISCUSSION OF ADDING ADDITIONAL ROUTES FOR HORSE CARRIAGES; Connie James of Horne's Buggy Rides asked the Commission to consider the route she had submitted

**COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2020
MINUTES OF MEETING
PAGE 3**

that would start on the Wilkins property next to Chattahoochee Dog Haus to Edelweiss Strasse to Brucken Strasse and back to Chattahoochee Dog Haus. Motion to temporarily approve the submitted route for 60 days from Connie James of Horne's Buggy rides after she provides the City with written approval from the property owners that will be affected made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Lee Landress. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Chris Seymour of Alpine Carriage asked the Commission to consider allowing his carriages to travel a route from possibly Charlemane's Kingdom on the north end of town or from the new antique store on the south end but that he has not yet secured a location. Mayor Steve Fowler asked him to bring in a diagram of the route and written approval from the property owner for the location he is considering. He then asked for a 1 day permit on Valentine's day to ride passengers for Cowboys & Angels customers that will start from their parking lot down Chattahoochee Street and back. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

DISCUSSION OF NOISE ORDINANCE REGARDING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES; Mayor Steve Fowler stated he had a complaint from a property owner back during Oktoberfest of the noise coming from an outdoor band across the river from their property, that the property is located in an R2 area, but rather that have an Ordinance changed at this time he asked Building & Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland to approach the owner to see if he would voluntarily build a band shell that would help with the noise.

POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS; Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Captain Mark Harris gave a verbal report and stated there had been several arrest made that there are currently 2 open positions available with the department but they are being very selective in their choices.

FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS; Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Fire Chief Jody Prickett was present and gave a verbal report. He stated the bunk room had been painted and is waiting on plumbing and flooring.

PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER OPERATIONS; City Manager Jerry Elkins stated that Public Works also had 2 positions open and had received several applications, that they had been very busy with the recent rains, snow and that the Christmas lights are scheduled to come down on February 29th.

BUILDING AND ZONING OPERATIONS; Building & Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland explained that the Planning Board had denied because of the size but had recommended

**COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2020
MINUTES OF MEETING
PAGE 4**

approval from the Commission. Motion for approval of a sign variance from Chad Jackson on the building where Ace Hardware was formally located, for a 5'x16' sign made by Commissioner Fred Garmon, 2nd by Commissioner Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

PURCHASES AND BIDS; None

ORDINANCES; None

RESOLUTIONS; None

EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PROPERTY ACQUISITION; Motion to go into Executive Session at 11:05 a.m. made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2nd by Commissioner Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to resume the regular meeting at 11:50 p.m. made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

There were no motions as a result of the Executive Session.

CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS; Commissioner Jeff Ash stated it had been a good meeting as did Commissioner Geneva Elwell.

ADJOURNMENT; Motion to adjourn at 11:51 made by Commissioner Lee Landress, 2nd, by Commissioner Fred Garmon. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

RESPECTFULLY PREPARED BY CITY CLERK MARILYN CHASTAIN

