

**CITY OF HELEN
COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 15, 2022
10:00 A.M.
AGENDA**

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR FRED GARMON
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 18, 2022
6. ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
 - A. UPDATE FROM FLECTCHER HOLLIDAY OF EMI ON CURRENT PROJECTS
 - B. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF PAVING THE FOLLOWING STREETS WITH FUNDING FROM THE LMIG GRANT AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF \$267,600.00; BRUCKEN STRASSE, MUNICH STRASSE, RIVER STREET, AND DYE STREET
 - C. FINANCIAL REPORT
 - D. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF A WORKSHOP RETREAT AND/OR DATES FOR FUTURE WORKSHOPS AT CITY HALL
 - E. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ADDING SCAN & GO PAYMENT OPTION TO PARKING LOT PAY STATIONS AND CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE RATE INCREASE
 - F. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACTING WITH WHITE COUNTY ELECTIONS TO CONDUCT CITY ELECTIONS
 - G. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF REVISION OF ORDINANCE TO CLARIFY NIGHTLY RENTAL REQUIREMENTS
 - H. CONSIDERATION OF REVISION TO CURRENT BREWPUB ORDINANCE
7. HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT
8. HELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY REPORT

9. POLICE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
10. FIRE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
11. PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER MONTHLY REPORT
12. BUILDING AND ZONING MONTHLY REPORT
13. PURCHASES AND BIDS
14. ORDINANCES
15. RESOLUTIONS
16. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC
17. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL
18. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS
19. ADJOURNMENT

**THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED FEBRUARY 11, 2022 @ 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 15, 2022
MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Helen City Commission met on Tuesday February 15, 2022 in the Commission Chambers at Helen City Hall. Mayor Fred Garmon called the meeting to order. City Clerk Marilyn Chastain called the roll and the following were present; Commissioner Jeff Ash, Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston, Mayor Fred Garmon, Commissioner Cliff Hood, Commissioner Steve Fowler. Also attending were Finance Director Mona Wood, City Manager Jerry Elkins, City Attorney Carl Free, City Clerk Marilyn Chastain, Police Chief Brian Stephens, Fire Chief Jody Prickett, Public Works Director Jack Morgan, Building & Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was given

APPROVAL OF AGENDA; Motion to amend the Agenda with the addition as item I under Administration, Public Hearing regarding proposed zoning change of 2.60 acres owned by Chris & Lauren Williams known as tax map HO4C 127 from R-3 TO C-2 made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Steve Fowler. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 18, 2022; Motion to approve as written made by Commissioner Steve Fowler, 2nd by Commissioner Cliff Hood. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

UPDATE FROM FLETCHER HOLLIDAY OF EMI ON CURRENT PROJECTS; List of projects discussed was presented at the meeting and is included as an integral part of the Minutes. Highlights discussed were; the Hex Street well is under construction and they are waiting on backordered items to complete and should be finished in March. The Chattahoochee River sewer line project is in progress and are currently stabilizing the sewer line and hope to finish in March. The Groundwater Development is for future well sites and two locations were recommended by Ground Water Services that conducted the site study, one being on City owned property on Chattahoochee Strass and the other on property owned by Innsbruck with the understanding that negotiations would need to be made with Innsbruck property owner to purchase that location. Commissioner Steve Fowler made a motion to allow EMI to proceed with application for permits from EPD for well site drilling on the Chattahoochee Street location and well site drilling on property in Innsbruck, 2nd by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

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Next was discussed the Meter Replacement project with Fletcher Holliday stating there had been a roadblock by not receiving any bids to install the meters, but were working on getting possible contractors to do the installation.

Next item discussed was the Main Street sidewalk project to have a completion date of July 2022.

The Solids Removal at the Waste Water Treatment Facility is in process of preparing a request for proposal for removal and disposal with project slated to begin in June 2022 and anticipated completion date of August 2022.

The Main Lift-Station is in design phase with bidding going out next month, and construction tentatively scheduled for the winter of 2022.

Well #11 Lenzen Property Well is slated for completion date of July 2023 or hopefully sooner.

Smoke testing and manhole evaluations have been finished in Helen and Innsbruck with the final report that includes recommendations have been completed and submitted to the City staff for review. Also discussed that when there are heavy rains it flows into the sewer system and have recommendations to remedy.

Last item discussed on projects from EMI was the Land Application System improvements with the evaluation to be completed in the winter of 2022. Plans and specs for the projected construction schedule for Spray field #1B are set to begin clearing by ASI construction. EMI is evaluating erosion repairs to spray field 3B. Motion to approve moving forward with plans to correct the erosion on spray field 3B made by Commissioner Steve Fowler, 2nd by Commissioner Cliff Hood. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF PAVING THE FOLLOWING STREETS WITH FUNDING FROM THE LMIG GRANT AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF \$267,600.00; BRUCKEN STRASSE, MUNICH STRASSE, RIVER STREET, AND DYE STREET; Motion to approve funding from the LMIG Grant and SPLOST Fund made by Commissioner Cliff Hood, 2nd by Commissioner Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

FINANCIAL REPORT; Finance Director Mona Wood was present and gave a verbal report. Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Motion to approve the Financial report made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

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DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF A WORKSHOP RETREAT AND/OR DATES FOR FUTURE WORKSHOPS AT CITY HALL; Motion to have a March workshop on the 2nd Tuesday of March at 10:00 a.m. and other workshops as needed with proper notice made by Commissioner Cliff Hood, 2nd by Commissioner Steve Fowler. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to have an offsite workshop hosted by EMI in the spring with date and location to be determined made by Commissioner Steve Fowler, 2nd by Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ADDING SCAN & GO PAYMENT OPTION TO PARKING LOT PAY STATIONS AND CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE RATE INCREASE; Motion to add scan & go payment by phone option made by Commissioner Steve Fowler, 2nd by Commissioner Cliff Hood. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to increase parking fee at City's pay parking lots to \$6.00 made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACTING WITH WHITE COUNTY ELECTIONS TO CONDUCT CITY ELECTIONS; Report prepared by City Clerk Marilyn Chastain and included with specifications as an integral part of the Minutes. Motion to approve at a cost per City Election an estimate of \$5717.35 received from the White County Election office made by Commissioner Steve Fowler, 2nd by Commissioner Jeff Ash. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF REVISION OF ORDINANCE TO CLARIFY NIGHTLY RENTAL REQUIREMENTS; City Attorney Carl Free explained to the Commission the confusion of the Ordinance that was drafted and in place now back in 1995, before nightly rentals were common, and the confusion on who is responsible to pay Occupational tax. He recommends revising the Ordinance to clarify these concerns by Staff and Citizens. City Clerk Marilyn Chastain and Deputy Clerk Mirinda Dispain both agreed that the current Ordinance does not clearly state who is required to pay. Deputy Clerk Mirinda Dispain went further into explaining that the new law passed on remittance of Hotel/Motel taxes does not require the large companies such as VRBO to specify whom they are remitting taxes for and for how many nights which makes her job difficult on trying to correctly apply the taxes and hopes that the current Legislation will rectify this law. It was decided to have City Attorney Carl Free to draft an Ordinance that will address these issues.

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CONSIDERATION OF REVISION TO CURRENT BREWPUB ORDINANCE; City Attorney Carl Free stated he had been notified by a potential new business looking to place a brewpub in Helen and that the current City Ordinance only allows for the sale of 3,000 wholesale gallons, but that the state law allows production of 10,000 gallons and the sale of 5,000 gallons wholesale and would like to put in place the same as the state code 3-5-36. Motion to revise current Ordinance to mirror what the State allows and have first reading at the next meeting made by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston, 2nd by Commissioner Steve Fowler. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

PUBLIC HEARING regarding proposed zoning change of 2.60 acres owned by Chris & Lauren Williams known as tax map HO4C 127 FROM R-3 TO C-2; Motion to go into public hearing at 11:19 a.m. made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Steve Fowler. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to approve the zoning change of 2.60 +/- owned by Chris & Lauren Williams known as tax map HO4C 127 FROM R-3 TO C-2 made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Cliff Hood. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to come out of Public Hearing at 11:21 a.m. made by Commissioner Cliff Hood, 2nd by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT; Director Jerry Brown was present and gave a verbal report. Report included as an integral part of the Minutes. Director Jerry Brown asked the City of Helen to sponsor the annual Songwriters convention by donating \$2400.00 toward the purchase of T-shirts and allowing the City Logo to be placed on the T-shirts. Commissioner Jeff Ash made a motion to approve the donation to come out of the Hotel/Motel tax fund, 2nd by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

HELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY REPORT; Helen Chamber of Commerce member Judy Holloway was present and gave a verbal report. She stated that the Fashing banners had been ordered and received and will be ready to put up at next year's event. She also stated that the grant money they had received was going to be used for replacing the sound system, kitchen remodeling, installing windows, and replacing Christmas lights and wiring, and that this year's Trout Tournament would be the 33rd annual tournament.

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

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

PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER MONTHLY REPORT; Public Works Director Jack Morgan was present and asked if the Commission had any questions. Report included as an integral part of the Minutes.

BUILDING AND ZONING MONTHLY REPORT; Building and Zoning Director Darrell Westmoreland was present and gave a verbal report. Report included as an integral part of the minutes. He also informed the Commission of the new sound system purchased for the Market Platz and that the speakers would work off wi-fi. He also stated that there had been someone found to shoot the fireworks, and that the decision on how much to spend needs to be made, but had been approached by the business owners that normally put on a separate show of possibly going in together and contributing to the cost and have only 1 show. Considerations are to be discussed.

PURCHASES AND BIDS; None

ORDINANCES; None

RESOLUTIONS; None

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC; Mervin Barbree owner of Café International stated that he as a business owner is concerned with the amount of turn-over of employees in the Police Department and thinks this is odd, and as a business owner wants the City to touch on to see why. He thinks this is weird to see such turn-over. He stated he thinks that this needed to be said, and believes that the Council should look into.

Scott Oliver also stood and stated he had recently purchased 2 rental properties, that he thinks that things that have been done are not fair and those involved were not treated fairly, also that the City has grown and should do right for the citizens and for the people that come here.

EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL; Motion to go into Executive Session at 11:45 a.m. made by Commissioner Steve Fowler, 2nd by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

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Motion to come out of the Executive Session at 12:45 p.m. made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Cliff Hood. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

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

CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS; None

ADJOURNMENT; Motion to adjourn at 12:46 p.m. made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Cinnamon Ruston. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

RESPECTFULLY PREPARED BY CITY CLERK MARILYN CHASTAIN

