**CITY OF BOWMAN**

**Bowman City Hall**

**Monthly meeting**

**November 13th, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESNET**

Mayor, Scott Harpold

Council Member, Mary Clark

Council Member, Henrietta Williams

Council Member, Leah Carey

Council Member, Betty Jo Maxwell

Council Member, Jeff Spratlin

Attorney, Adam Nelson

**STAFF PRESENT:**

City Clerk, Tifany Verdell

Assistant City Clerk, Kendra Jones

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. Council woman Clark was asked to do the prayer followed by

the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Scott Harpold called meeting to order.

**Approval of minutes:**

Council woman Clark made a motion to approve October 9th minutes, 2nd by Council woman Maxwell. Mayor called for a vote by show of hands motion passed unanimously.

**GMA Retirement Plan:**

Attorney Nelson explained the new changes to the retirement plan and explained that those changes didn’t affect Bowman. However, because the plan changed for other counties in Georgia everyone had to vote to adopt it. Council woman Williams made a motion to adopt the changes in the GMA Retirement plan. Second from Council member Spratlin. Mayor called for a vote by show of hand and I’s. Motion passed unanimously. Mayor stated council will vote again for the second reading next month.

**Court system of Bowman**:

Mayor has been working with our attorneys to establish a city court to protect the city. The mayor and attorney explained that the city court is in the City’s Charter and is set up to handle issues within the city regarding violations, citations, and any other issues outlined in the charter. City Council will need to appoint a lawyer to act as the judge for the court which is a requirement by Georgia law. The court can be monthly, quarterly, or however the city decides. Discussion was had. Mayor stated the first goal is to locate and select a lawyer to be the judge of the court and plan from there.

**Mayor’s Report**

Mayor Harpold discussed the progress on the audit which is under way. Auditors have completed 2020 and 2021. They are gathering the information to begin 2022 and 2023. He stated a big concern right now is getting a generator for the wells. Mayor addressed he will be reassessing all committees.

**Council member Reports:**

**Councilwoman Carey:** nothing to report.

**Councilwoman Williams:** reported that the mistletoe market will be on December 6th from 6-8pm. She expressed all the activities that will be happening, and refreshments will be available. December 14th will be the Christmas Parade. The entry fee is $15.00. The theme this year is Christmas through the decades.

**Council member Spratlin:** Reported on the road work. Road work has been pushed back until the 2nd or 3rd week in December due to setbacks in Elberton and Franklin County. He discussed ordering one manhole riser to ensure it fits before ordering multiple.

**Councilwoman Clark:** asked for a hard copy of the fall festival expenditures. She also reported on her conversations with Mr. Hal Chitwood regarding a written report as to why several business and permits were not issued or denied. The mayor expressed in a previous meeting the reasons of why that already had been expressed. He stated that we want business in Bowman, but they must do it the right way. Councilwoman Clark stated that along with Tammy Dalton, they will be creating a budget for the inspection cost of the Bowman Elementary School building and the other areas of the school. Council member Spratlin asked about previous inspections that were completed. Councilwoman Clark explained those previous inspections were only for the gym since that was the only area approved at that time. An inspection of the gym has taken place; no allergens were found. We are concentrating on the gym right now because that's where the food pantry is housed.

These new inspections will cover the other area of the schools.

**Question from the audience:** Teri Lunsford asked about why they have been denied a c.o. for over 6 months. Mayor Harpold informed her that the city’s attorney would reach out to them by letter explaining the reasons. Attorney Nelson offered to speak with her and husband after the meeting.

**Councilwoman Maxwell:** stated she had attended the development authority meeting, and they had a good meeting. Councilwoman Maxwell informed everyone that new businesses are looking into moving into the county, and Athen’s Tech is the number one school of its type in the state.

**Hospital Authority:** Tyler Taylor went over the hospital 1st quarter summary. 9.2 million in charges, in patient revenue is down, however outpatient revenue is trending up. Deductions are 4.7 million, net revenue is 4.5 million these numbers are in line with the budget, but overall, the average is below previous years. The Hospital received half a million dollars from a tax credit this year so far which help the budget. This tax credit is available to the public until December 31st, 2024. The credit works as follows: the taxpayer must owe state taxes, and the tax credit program allows the taxpayer to pay what they owe to the hospital of their choice in Georgia instead of to the state treasury. Mr. Taylor announced the hospital will be opening its own primary care offices. The first one is set to open early January 2025 in Hartwell, Ga. The Jimmy Johnson golf tournament was a success. January 25th will be the Casino night sponsored by the hospital.

**Library Report:** Vivian Barnes read the report. 185 books were checked out, 11 DVDs, 5 park passes, 217 patrons, 77 computer users, wi-fi users 105. Library has 1 program ongoing the crochet class twice a month. In copies, prints, and faxes the library collected $77.50. Pines’ fees collected was 9.50. Total monetary intake for the month was $87.00. The library is planning a Polar Express movie event. This event is set to follow the Bowman Parade on December 14th, 2024. Cost is $2.00 per person. Children are encouraged to come in their pjs, and bring a blanket, and popcorn will be served. Monetary donations are encouraged for food goods.

**Speakers:**

Randy Noyes: requested $400.00 be added to the budget to fund the senior luncheon program. He is wanting to start the program back up January 2025. The program will supply a hot meal to seniors every 2nd Wednesday of the month. He has volunteers already and is working on a budget. The meals will be free for the participants. Mayor suggested donating a lump sum of $5,000.00 from the ARPA funds to fund the luncheon for the year.

Della Wheeler: Passed out a letter asking for a contribution for Bowman Youth on The Move. The program runs from August to May of each school year. The program is currently serving 38-40 kids biweekly. This program also partners with the Friends of Bowman Library and Elbert County Library to offer activities during the summer months. Mrs. Wheeler stated she was pre-approved in 2023 but since the chain of command changed, she wanted to make it official with the current officials. Council woman Clark verified with the clerks that this was preapproved, and City Clerk Verdell stated the money was already set aside in the ARPA account. Council woman Clark then made a motion for the city to donate$1500.00 dollars to Bowman Youth on The Move. Seconded by Council woman Carey. Mayor called for a vote by I’s. Motion passed unanimously.

Speaker unknown: stated she wanted to address some safety concerns regarding squatters in the city. She stated a fire was started out of retaliation of a property being sold by the squatters that were living there. She is asking for precautions to be put in place. Mayor stated if any citizens come upon a squatter or know of a squatter situation please contact law enforcement.

Council Woman Williams stated that no motion was made to support the senior luncheon and wanted to know if the council was planning to move forward. Council Woman Clark asked would the $5000.00 dollars be for the whole year or just a one-time payment to help start the program. She asked for numbers. City Clerk Verdell stated herself and the assistant city clerk Jones would work on getting the numbers out to everyone in the coming weeks. Discussion was had. Mayor suggested the topic be tabled until the December meeting to allow for research.

**Speaker:**

Angie Harpold wanted to suggest the council have a work session to help research and discuss how to use the Arpa funds. Since the deadline is approaching quickly.

Council woman Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second from Council member Spratlin. Mayor called for a vote by I’s. I’s have it vote passed unanimously.

**Meeting Adjourned**