

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF SUGAR HILL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5039 WEST BROAD STREET
SUGAR HILL, GEORGIA
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023, 7:30 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER – by Mayor Hembree. Present were Mayor Brandon Hembree, Mayor Pro Tem Marc Cohen, Alvin Hicks Mason Roszel, Jenn Thatcher and Taylor Anderson. Also present were City Manager Paul Radford, Assistant City Manager Troy Besseche, City Clerk Jane Whittington and City Attorney Frank Hartley.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

INVOCATION – given by Council Member Anderson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Mayor Hembree stated that the agenda would need to be amended to add the item recommending raising the homestead exemptions on property tax. Council Member Cohen motioned to amend the agenda to add changing the homestead exemptions for Sugar Hill property tax. Council Member Hicks seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting & Executive Session December 12, 2022; Work Session & Executive Session December 5, 2022; Work Session and Special Called Meeting January 3, 2023 Council Member Thatcher motioned to approve the minutes for all of the meeting as presented by staff. Council Member Cohen seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

AWARDS/PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

Municipal Training Board Presentation – Mayor Pro Tem Cohen talked about training and the importance of elected officials attending the training and networking that is needed to make decisions regarding their municipality. Council Member Hicks will attend the mandatory Newly Elected Training in March. Mayor Hembree has reached the level of Certificate of Distinction. It requires 204 hours of continuing education to achieve. He also attended and completed the Robert Knox Leadership Institute and received a certificate for that. Mayor Hembree stated that he felt that this training is important and paid for it all on his own.

Proclamation - City of Civility - Mayor & Council, Mayor Pro Tem Cohen stated that GMA has a new program that mirrors the Certified City of Ethics and it is the City of Civility. The Mayor and Council all agree that the city should adopt this proclamation and begin the process of becoming a Certified City of Civility. Mayor Hembree stated that it is important to the city and wanted the Council to formally adopt this resolution as well as read it for the public. Mayor Pro Tem Cohen motioned to adopt the proclamation and pledge to practice and promote civility in the city, forward to GMA on behalf of the Mayor and City Council, staff and residents of the city. Council Member Roszel seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

REPORTS

**CITY ATTORNEY
COUNCIL
MAYOR
CITY CLERK
CITY MANAGER
YOUTH COUNCIL**

CITIZENS AND GUESTS COMMENTS – Gary Pirkle, 440 Silk Oak Way, stated that the property on Highway 20 that was the former Sugar Bowl had a tree that is dead and decaying. The tree is about 50’ tall and could fall on the road and cause a problem. He requested that staff notify the owner and responsible party before it falls.

CONSENT AGENDA

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing, VAR-23-001 SDP Brogdon LLC, Tax parcel 7-253-016, Variance to Construct Pre-Cast Concrete Tilt Wall – Planning Director Awana explained that the city received an application from SDP Brogdon, LLC requesting a variance to use pre-cast walls for a proposed 89,000 sq. ft. industrial warehouse building at Brogdon Rd., Tax parcel 7-253-016. Pre-cast is only allowed in our ordinance for buildings 150,000 sq. ft. or larger. The proposed building is similar to existing buildings along Brogdon Rd. The staff recommends approval with the Exhibits. The public hearing was opened and there were no comments for or against the variance so the hearing was closed. Mayor pro Tem Cohen motioned to approve VAR-23-001 to allow tilt/pre-cast walls with the following conditions: final building elevations shall substantially resemble the attached drawings labeled Exhibit 1-3. Council Member Anderson seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

Right of Way Acceptance, Primrose Creek 2C – Planning Director Awana explained that Grand Communities, LLC has requested that the city accept the street associated with residential subdivision Primrose Creek Unit 2C. The final plat for Unit 2C was recorded on June 20, 2017, and contains 30 single-family homes on nine acres. In coordination with the city public works department recent inspections found no outstanding issues. All performance and maintenance agreements have been closed out and the roads are up to city standards. Council Member Thatcher motioned to accept and record the right of way and acceptance deed for all streets and associated public improvements within the right of way for residential subdivision Primrose Creek Unit 2C. Council Member Roszel seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

IGA, Gwinnett LCI Greenway Project – Assistant City Manager Besseche explained that the city recently received notice that the certification by GDOT for the locally administered LAP program was complete and we are ready to move forward with the LCI project as the project sponsor. Gwinnett County was instrumental in moving the project forward and assisting in administering the contract. With the LAP approval finalized the city is ready to terminate the Intergovernmental Agreement with the county and proceed independently on completion of the project. Staff recommends approval of the termination document and to authorize the Mayor to sign for the city. Council Member Hicks motioned to approve the termination of the Intergovernmental Agreement with Gwinnett County to serve as the city’s certified representative and sponsor for the LCI Greenway Project. Council Member Roszel seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

GDOT Project Framework Agreement – Planning Director Awana explained that the city was awarded Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) funds to complete preliminary engineering toward implementation of our Sugar Hill Greenway Extension plan which was conceived through the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) grant program in 2020. This project includes enhancements to pedestrian infrastructure and intersection improvements. The Federal award for the GDOT project number 0019214 is \$720,000 and the local match \$180,000. Council Member Hicks motioned to adopt the Resolution to approve the Project Framework Agreement for preliminary engineering with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). Council Member Roszel seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

Contract Award, Road Resurfacing and Repairs, Project 23-003 – Assistant City Manager Besseche explained that the 2022/2023 road resurfacing and repairs (LMIG) project has twenty-five roads slated to repair. The funds for this project are from LMIG and SPLOST. The bid was advertised, and sixteen companies were interested with eight bids being submitted. The lowest bid was received from Georgia Paving, Inc. Staff confirmed the qualifications of the low bidder and recommends that the contract be awarded to Georgia Paving in

the amount of \$993,794.96. Council member Anderson motioned to award the construction contract to Georgia Paving, Inc. for the road resurfacing and repair (LMIG) project in the amount of \$993,794.96. Council Member Thatcher seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

The Mayor stated that the staff has evaluated the homestead exemption for the city property taxes and has determined a need to update the amounts through local legislation. Each of the homestead types and amounts must be voted on separately through the legislature. The City Manager explained that all three will benefit a wide spectrum of citizens in the city and have a budget impact of \$200,000 to \$250,000 per year. He read the homestead exemptions that are proposed to be changed. Council Member Cohen motioned that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Sugar Hill do hereby unanimously support the introduction of local legislation during the 2023 Session of the Georgia General Assembly to increase various homestead and other exemptions for taxpayers of the City of Sugar Hill. Specifically, the city seeks to amend and increase three different exemptions:

- 1) Increase the regular homestead (S1R) from \$2,000 to \$10,000
- 2) Increase the senior homestead exemption (SR2) for homeowners aged 65 and older with no income limit from \$2,000 to \$10,000.
- 3) Increase the disability/other (S3R) homestead exemption for homeowners aged 62 and older or disabled, from \$2,000 to \$10,000 and increase the income limit from not to exceed \$5,000 to \$10,000 annually, as evidenced on line 15c, after deductions, of the most recent Georgia Tax Return.

Council Member Roszel seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: TO DISCUSS LEGAL, REAL ESTATE AND/OR PERSONNEL – Council Member Thatcher motioned to adjourn into Executive Session for real estate, legal or personnel. Council Member Roszel seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

PUBLIC ACTION TAKEN OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION – there was no action taken out of Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT – Council Member Thatcher motioned to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Cohen seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

Brandon Hembree, Mayor

Jane Whittington, City Clerk