

**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2008  
7:30 PM CITY HALL ANNEX**

**CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Pirkle called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mayor Gary Pirkle, Mayor Pro Tem Mike Sullivan, Council Members Marc Cohen, Steve Edwards (arrived at meeting after Agenda item Citizen & Guest Comments), Susie Gajewski and Nick Thompson. Also present were City Manager Bob Hail, City Attorney Frank Hartley and City Clerk Jane Whittington.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG** – The pledge was led by Boy Scout Troup 317.  
**INVOCATION** – Mayor Pirkle gave the invocation.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Council Member Sullivan requested to add Year End Employee Compensation to the end of the Agenda after Executive Session. Council Member Cohen motioned to approve the amended agenda. Council Member Gajewski seconded the motion. Approved 4-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – November 10, 2008 Council Meeting – Council Member Sullivan motioned to approve the Minutes as written. Council Member Cohen seconded the motion. Approved 4-0.

**PROCLAMATION – Tyler Avery** – Council Member Cohen introduced Tyler Avery and read the proclamation presented to him. Tyler is battling Mitochondria Disease. His family and friends came up after the presentation for pictures with the Mayor and Council.

**CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT** – City Attorney Frank Hartley had no report for regular session.

**COUNCIL REPORTS**

**Council Member Mike Sullivan** summarized the year January through December 2008. The Recreation Department did an awesome job with the tree lighting and Christmas celebration. The event keeps growing and our biggest challenge is handling the growth. The tree was great, but he’s hoping we’ll see an even bigger one next year. The Parks and Recreation Department has experienced tremendous growth and improvements over the past year and hopefully things will continue to get even better. The City is finally starting to see progress towards building an environment conducive for a downtown. This year we have seen the City purchase and demolish the NuAir facility. They are in the process of creating 2 central retention ponds; currently constructing a beautiful wrought-iron fence in front of the cemetery. There have also been improvements to the park amenities including: expansion and improvements to E.E. Robinson; work on the new Gary Pirkle Park (on Austin Garner Rd); and planning for an expansion to the Golf Course Club House. There have been improvements in sharing what’s going on in Sugar Hill: getting more news (positive) in both Gwinnett Daily Post and The Atlanta Journal & Constitution; and a new color newsletter in the gas bill. The City has protected/minimized changes to our citizens from Gwinnett County. They reduced the cost of the Stormwater Fees the County wanted to charge while using the money locally to address local issues instead of those issues currently down in South Gwinnett; and minimized the impact of the trash changes happening in Gwinnett. There have been E-City improvements: addition of an electronic version of the City’s meeting agenda with all the publicly available detail for the rezoning decisions that come before the council. Before this addition the requester would come to City Hall for a copy. The information can now be downloaded right off the internet. All City forms are now available on the website.

CARE system – not only keeps track of complaints and issues, but keeps the submitter of the problem in the loop as to its status. The Gas Department has added the capability for paying bills online. This popular improvement played a significant role in the City winning the MGAG's Blue Flame award for excellent customer service. There are constant improvements going on. These are the most visible changes that have happened over the last year. The City has improved in a number of other areas that just aren't visible to the casual observer. The City has done an excellent job laying new pipe, adding new sidewalks, road improvements, etc. Most of what the City does isn't noticed if they are doing it right, and it's very noticeable if they mess up. Thanks for not only keeping things running smoothly, but constantly improving how things work.

**Council Member Nick Thompson** reported that the DDA will meet January 27, 2009 at the City Hall Annex. There is no DDA meeting in December.

**Council Member Marc Cohen** reported that at the last meeting he mentioned that he was going to be a principal for a day at Sugar Hill Elementary School. He walked into this great opportunity and he got to meet a number of the teachers. They handed him an Agenda that was very dense in print. After a full day of meeting teachers and administrators, the School Council, Gwinnett Board of Education, reviewing teachers, announcements, etc. he thought that this Agenda was made just for him. At the end of the day at 4:30, he was exhausted. He asked Dr. Levent if she made this Agenda just for him; she informed him that they scaled it back for him. He gave a shout out to the students, the staff, the administrators, the principal and the School Council at Sugar Hill Elementary School. He could not believe what a Principal does in one day. He had a lot of fun and learned a lot and hopefully was able to contribute. He thanked the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and the School Board for allowing him to participate in this program. He wanted to echo Council Member Sullivan on some of the things the City has accomplished this past year. One thing was they added public safety initiatives, a big one being the addition of Plaza Security. He is looking forward to hearing their update. He wished everyone Happy Holidays, Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa and a Happy New Year.

**Council Member Susie Gajewski** reported that the Christmas Celebration was wonderful this year. Santa was terrific.

**MAYOR'S REPORT – Mayor Gary Pirkle** mentioned a few things that are present throughout the downtown. There is an addition of new street lights with new Christmas decorations attached to them. There are new Christmas decorations on the Gazebo that also help with the lighting of this area. In the past this area has been a little dark for the Holiday event. The tree lighting went very well. There is a new artificial tree this year. It was 20 feet tall and they are going to add four to eight feet to it next year. The City is constructing a decorative pond downtown next to the property that was formerly Nuair. The Mayor showed a rendering of the new pond. It will serve as a downtown retention. It has a fountain in it with a stage and an amphitheatre. There will be a walking trail around it with a bridge. He stated that this would be aesthetically pleasing and help to draw businesses in as the downtown is built.

**CITY CLERK'S REPORT – City Clerk Jane Whittington** reported the following: Sugar Hill issued 12 new business licenses for the month of November. Out of the 12, 9 were commercial business locations and three were home based. The new commercial businesses include Peachstate Auto Insurance, 4450 Nelson Brogdon Blvd; Crothall Clinical Equipment Services 4402 Mendi Court, they repair biomedical equipment in hospitals and medical clinics. Occupation Tax/Business License Renewals will go out this month and are due by January 31, 2009. The first step will be the application update process where gross receipts are reported. Alcohol License renewals are due by December 31, 2008. City Hall will be closed

Thursday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and Friday, December 27<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas holidays. We will be open regular business hours on Christmas Eve.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:** City Manager Bob Hail reported the following (See attachment #1)

**CITY SECURITY UPDATE:** Plaza Security reported that they are now present in the community and their phone number is available if needed. They are meeting with the homeowner's associations and going to each business to meet with them and introduce themselves.

**CITIZENS AND GUESTS COMMENTS** – There were no comments from citizens or guests.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**PUBLIC HEARING – RZ-08-006, Charles Pruitt, Nelson Brogdon Blvd., +2.31 Acres, currently zoned RS-100, requesting BG** – Director Awana presented the application. Staff recommended approval with some conditions. The Public Hearing was opened and there were no comments from the applicant or the public so the Public Hearing was closed. Council Member Cohen motioned to approve RZ-08-006 with conditions as outlined in Exhibit B with condition #3 to be used without the timeline. Council Member Sullivan seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

**Resolution- Georgia DNR Recreational Trails Program** – the City Manager explained that the City has already applied for the grant from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. They requested that the Mayor and Council pass this resolution, which commits the funding to build these trails whether they get a grant match or not. Council Member Sullivan motioned to approve the Resolution to the Georgia DNR Recreational Trails Program. Council Member Cohen seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

**Planning Commission Appointments** – The Mayor explained that two of the current members terms expire December 31<sup>st</sup> – Chad Hall and Kim Hall. The floor was opened for the seat currently held by the President Chad Hall. Council Member Edwards nominated Chad Hall. There were no other nominations so the floor was closed and Chad Hall was re-appointed. The floor was opened for the seat currently held by Kim Hall. Council Member Sullivan nominated Kim Hall. There were no other nominations so the floor was closed and Kim Hall was re-appointed.

**Municipal Court Judge Appointments** – Council Member Cohen nominated for appointment Chief Judge Margaret Washburn and Associate Judges Charles Barrett and Kathryn Schrader to an additional one year term. There were no other nominations so the floor was closed and the judges re-appointed.

**PUBLIC HEARING – 2009 Proposed Budget** – the City Manager recapped the year and summarized the 2009 Budget presented tonight. This is the third Public Hearing held on the budget. The Public Hearing was opened and Mr. West, a resident in Arbor Clos had comments. He recommended that the budget be conservative. The Mayor summarized the history of the budget and the past eight years. Council Member Cohen recommended cutting the budget by 10%. The Mayor wanted an example of the cuts because there was not that much fat in the budget. Council Member Thompson asked the City Manager questions regarding the budget. He asked the City Manager that if the economy gets catastrophically worse will he come to the Council regarding the budget. He stated that he would. The Public Hearing was closed. Council Member Edwards motioned to approve the 2009 Proposed Budget as

written. Council Member Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion was approved 3-2 with Council Members Cohen and Gajewski voting nay.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: TO DISCUSS LEGAL, REAL ESTATE AND/OR PERSONNEL:** Council Member Cohen motioned to enter Executive Session for legal, real estate and personnel at 8:45 p.m. Council Member Edwards seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

The meeting was reconvened at 11:05 p.m. Item # 6 added to the Agenda tonight Year End Salary Adjustment was tabled for legal questions. The action out of Executive Session: Council Member Sullivan motioned to adjust the salary of Bob Hail the City Manager by 6%; and adjust the salary of the City Clerk Jane Whittington by 6% and adjust the 2009 Budget to reflect this. Council Member Thompson seconded the motion. The motion was approved 3-2 with Council Member Cohen and Gajewski voting nay.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Council Member Cohen motioned to adjourn. Council Member Gajewski seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

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Gary Pirkle, Mayor

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Jane Whittington, City Clerk