



## BROOKS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES

May 20, 2024

Council Member Ted Britt led the Invocation, Mayor Langford led the Pledge, then called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Council Members Present: Ted Britt  
Kay Brumbelow  
Brian Davis  
Scott Israel  
Todd Speer

Council Members Absent: None

Guest: Leslie Nieber, Building Official / Director  
Certified Building Code Official

The proposed Agenda for Monday, May 20, 2024, was emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the agenda; Council Member Kay Brumbelow made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; Council Member Todd Speer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The draft Council Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 15, 2024, were emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the Council minutes; Council Member Kay Brumbelow made a motion to approve the minutes of April 15, 2024, as presented; Council Member Brian Davis seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, with Council Members Ted Britt and Scott Israel abstaining.

#### **Proclamation:**

Mayor Langford read a proclamation commemorating the chartering ceremony of the Fayette County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the proclamation; Council Member Scott Israel made a motion to approve the proclamation as presented, and Council Member Todd Speer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Public Hearing:**

#### **Second Reading & Adoption: Amendment to Chapter 7 "Building & Development" Code of Ordinances**

Mayor Langford said that since the town relies on the county's building department to enforce its code of ordinances, it would be difficult for its codes to differ from theirs. Therefore, the town proposes adopting the County's building code ordinances after this second reading and public hearing.

Mayor Langford opened the public hearing at 6:33 p.m. Mayor Langford asked if there were any public comments regarding the Amendment to Chapter 7, “Building & Development” Code of Ordinances, hearing none; Mayor Langford closed the public hearing at 6:34 p.m.

**First Reading – Future Land Use Map Update:**

M. Ungaro reported that the Future Land Use Map was being updated due to either omissions or possible errors discovered during the variance request/approval of 185 Gable Rd.

A work session consisting of the Mayor, Council, Town Manager, Town Clerk, and two residents was held on Thursday, April 11th, to discuss the potential changes to two categories: Agricultural Residential, which comprises 2,948 Acres +/-, and Main Street, which is 94.23 Acres +/- and represents 3.2% of the land. This is the only area with other parcels in question or omissions. After a lengthy discussion, the following recommended changes were presented, and each resident affected by the potential change(s) was notified via USPS.

Recommended changes from Main Street to Agriculture 119 Woods Rd, 139 Woods Rd., 876 Hwy 85 Connector, 886 Hwy 85 Connector, 890 Hwy 85 Connector, 994 Hwy 85 Connector, and 1026 Hwy 85 Connector.

Recommended changes from Agriculture to Main Street: 137 Gable Rd., 141 Gable Rd., and 143 Gable Rd.

Mayor Langford opened the public hearing at 6:34 p.m. and asked if there were any comments.

G. Anander, who lives at 890 Hwy 85 Connector, asked what the point of the change is. M. Ungaro replied that it is not a zoning change; it does not affect your use of the property, nor does it affect property value or take away any rights or privileges; it is only a guide for the future development of the town.

Mayor Langford asked if there were more comments regarding the Future Land Use Map. Since there were no additional comments, Mayor Langford closed the public hearing at 6:38 p.m.

The second reading will be held during a public hearing and council meeting on June 17, 2024.

**First Reading – FY2025 Budget:**

L. Spohr reviewed the proposed FY2025 Budget. The FY2025 proposed budget is balanced for Government, Enterprise, and SPLOST funds.

Government Funds: \$438,510, SPLOST \$150,000 for a total of \$588,510, Enterprise Funds: Water & Sewer \$4,000, Solid Waste \$27,000, and Storm Water \$12,000 for a total of \$43,000.

L. Spohr stated that the proposed balanced budget reflects no change in the millage rate 1.207, valued at \$61,609, and forecasts an increase of LOST revenue to \$170k from \$142,500. Expenses have been increased between 2 to 5% due to increases received from utilities, computer subscriptions, and other cost of services and a 14.5% increase received for property and liability insurance for 2024-2025. Overall, a 5.9% increase in expenses versus the FY2024 budget.

The five-year projected expenses include Hardy Hall roof repair or replacement, Chapel HVAC replacement, replacing signage on Town Hall and banners on Main Street, new computers for the

Town Manager and Librarian, finishing the repairs to the Chapel windows, new cushions for the Chapel and as needed replacing interior Town Hall lights as they cease to work.

2017 SPLOST project(s) include engineering for the 85 Connector/Brooks Rd.

2023 SPLOST projects(s) include library upgrades and cemetery expansion.

L. Spohr presented to the Mayor and Council for their consideration a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for the town staff based on the 3.2% COLA Social Security implemented in January of 2024; in addition, due to inflation may have slowed, but prices have not gone down. Consumer prices were up 3.4% for the 12 months ending April, rising gasoline and shelter costs accounted for more than 70% of the monthly increase in overall inflation, and the over-the-year percentage change in the CPI (consumer price index) in the South region is at 3.8%. The 3% COLA would cost \$6,105, which includes all federal and state taxes the town is responsible for and would be funded using Fund Balance. The FY2023 audited Fund Balance amount is \$411,292.

L. Spohr reported that the proposed budget requires no action at this time unless the Mayor and Council would like to add the proposed COLA increase to the proposed budget, as it is not currently reflected in the budget presented this evening.

Mayor Langford opened the public hearing at 6:38 p.m. and asked if there were any public comments.

Mayor Langford asked about the cemetery expansion and thought the cemetery had already been surveyed. M. Ungaro replied that the cemetery had been previously surveyed. Still, the property pins must be verified before sales begin, and the GIS survey will allow direct input into our cemetery software.

Council Member Brian Davis wanted to address the COLA for the staff, as L. Spohr presented a 3.8% CPI for the south; a 3% increase would be good, but he would like to recommend a 4% COLA for the staff to ensure they stay up with inflation.

Mayor Langford asked if there were any further comments regarding the proposed FY2025 Budget; hearing none, the public hearing was closed at 7:01 p.m.

The second reading will be held during a public hearing and council meeting on June 17, 2024.

### **Old Business:**

### **Second Reading & Adoption: Amendment to Chapter 7 “Building & Development” Code of Ordinances**

Mayor Langford asked if there was any additional information regarding the Amendment to Chapter 7, “Building & Development” Code of Ordinances, since its first reading on Monday, April 15, 2024. Hearing none, the mayor asked for a motion regarding the Amendment. Council Member Todd Speer made a motion to approve the Amendment as presented. Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

### **Swearing in of Code Enforcement Officer – Leslie Nieber**

Mayor Langford swore Leslie Nieber in as the Town’s Building Official to assist the town in enforcing the adopted Amendment to Chapter 7, the “Building & Development” Code of

Ordinances.

**New Business:**

**Transportation Improvement Project Resolution for ARC 2024-003:**

M. Ungaro explained that Resolution No. 2024-003 is a Resolution of Commitment to Implement Project FA-02 to Promote Public Health, Safety, and Welfare for Other Purposes. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has issued a 2023 solicitation for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project funding proposals, and the Town of Brooks desires to submit an application for consideration to fund multiple resurfacing projects within Brooks. If awarded, the grant agreement for Federal financial assistance will impose certain obligations upon the Town of Brooks, including the Town providing their local share of the project costs. The grant application with ARC for resurfacing Brooks Road within the Town is for \$518,076, of which the federal/state funding is \$431,730, which means the Town will be responsible for \$86,346. M. Ungaro reported these funds would come from 2023 SPLOST funds.

Council Member Kay Brumbelow asked how much road it would cover. M. Ungaro replied that it would cover approximately 8/10 of a mile.

Council Member Ted Britt asked the estimated completion date, and M. Ungaro replied that it was approximately 18 months.

Mayor Langford requested a motion regarding Transportation Improvement Project Resolution 2024-003. Council Member Brian Davis made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-003 as presented, and Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

**First Reading – Future Land Use Map**

Mayor Langford stated that no action is required at this time. The second reading will occur at a public hearing Council meeting on June 17, 2024.

**First Reading – FY2025 Proposed Budget**

Council Member Brian Davis made a motion to change the proposed 3% COLA presented in the FY2025 Budget to 4% COLA. Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mayor Langford stated that no action is required at this time. The second reading will occur at a public hearing Council meeting on June 17, 2024.

**Committee Reports:**

**Mayor’s Report:** Mayor Langford stated he attended the Mayoral’s monthly breakfast last Thursday and will speak about Brooks at the upcoming Fayette County Board of Realtors in August.

**Planning and Zoning:** M. Ungaro stated a new variance request had been submitted for an 8’encroachment into the rear setback at 786 Hwy 85 Connector. It will be presented during a public hearing and council meeting on June 17, 2024.

**Recreation:** D. Holliman reported that baseball and softball are ending, and Allstars will conclude in June. The new T-Ball concession stand is coming along; BAR is hopeful for a soft opening in the Fall and a grand opening in the Spring, but much work still needs to be done.

**Library:** K. Bradley reported that the Brooks Library Summer Book Bingo would begin on June 4<sup>th</sup> and run through August 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is open to all children between the ages of 4 and 13. The program is intended to remind kids that reading is fun and playing bingo is even more fun, especially when you can win prizes.

**Town Clerk Report:** L. Spohr, the town continues to have problems with the USPS, with inconsistent mail delivery. It is now necessary for the Town to have the EMC payment delivered to EMC by a Town employee. The USPS will raise its rates for a first-class stamp from 68 cents to 73 cents, effective July 1st. To help offset the increase, the Town purchased additional forever stamps this month. Regarding the library mold situation, quotes have been received, but we will wait until all the quotes for the cause of the mold are received before mold removal, as the cause needs to be repaired first; SPLOST funds will be used for the masonry repairs.

**Finance Officer's Report:** L. Spohr reviewed the April financials; LOST increased compared to April 2023. LOST YTD has increased by 12.32%. March 2023 SPLOST was up 22.51% compared to last year's 2017 SPLOST, and for YTD, the 2023 SPLOST is up 2.24% compared to the previous year's 2017 SPLOST. Mayor Langford stated the town has no debt and that the excellent equity reported does not include the value of the land or buildings the town owns.

**Town Manager Report:**

**Transportation:**

The flashing stop sign at Morgan Mill and Hwy 85 Connector was replaced. The damaged sign was rewired and redeployed to the intersection of Brooks Rd and Hwy 85 Connector.

Survey work for the proposed roundabout at Brooks/Gable Rd & Hwy 85 Connector will be conducted this week.

The Town Engineer is preparing bid documents for two noteworthy projects:

1. Parking improvements on Church Alley
2. A traffic island with pedestrian facilities at the intersection of McIntosh Road and Hwy 85 Connector, which may install a sidewalk that will tie in with the 2023 SPLOST project.

Once bids have been received, I will present the contract for approval.

**Cemetery:**

Survey work will also be done on the front part of the cemetery to locate and inventory the previously placed lot markers. This will give us a count of available lots and is the first step in the 2023 SPLOST project to upgrade the cemetery.

**Conference:**

I attended GMA's Small Cities Conference in Carrolton at the end of April. Brooks was the recipient of a small grant that covered registration. Topics were centered on the specific needs of

smaller communities and were beneficial with classes on liability issues, executive sessions, revenue sources, and GMA's Dept. of Community & Economic Development.

**Bray Dinner:**

We are two weeks away from the Bray Elected Officials Appreciation Dinner on Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The Fayette Chamber of Commerce has sent invitations to the Mayor and Council; please let them know if you can attend. There is no charge for this event.

**Brooks Chapel:**

The windows have been reglazed and will be painted soon, weather permitting. The rotted portions will be repaired this week.

**Brooks Market:**

The market was this past Saturday. Other activities in town included a community-wide yard sale and the Brooks Century bicycle ride. Market attendance was down. Some think it was the threat of rain, the bike event, or the ill-timed community-wide yard sale.

**Any Other Business:**

Mayor Langford shared that in 2025, the Town of Brooks will mark the 60th anniversary of the first ballot for Brooks and the 115th anniversary of Brooks' first charter. L. Spohr and B. Watts will coordinate and organize an event to celebrate these events.

Mayor Langford said he would begin retyping the Brooks History Book he wrote in 2003 since the plates to reprint are gone. It will be updated to reflect changes since then; once completed, the Town can have it printed and sold to those who want to purchase a copy.

**Adjourn:** With no further business to discuss this evening, Mayor Langford asked for a motion to adjourn. Council Member Brian Davis offered a Motion to adjourn, and Council Member Scott Israel seconded it. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Lorey Spohr  
Town Clerk