



BROOKS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

April 17, 2023

Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel led the Invocation, Pledge and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tempore: Scott Israel

Council Member present: Ted Britt
Kay Brumbelow
Brian Davis
Todd Speer

Absent: Mayor Langford

The proposed Agenda for Monday, April 17, 2023, was emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Council Member Todd Speer made a Motion to approve the Agenda as presented; Council Member Ted Britt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

The draft Minutes for Monday, March 20, 2023, were emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Council Member Brian Davis made a Motion to approve the minutes as presented; Council Member Todd Speer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Old Business

Second Reading – Addition of Chapter 14 (elections) to the Code of Ordinances.

M. Ungaro reminded Mayor Pro Tempore and Council that the Town is in the process of continuing to add to Town ordinances. The Town Attorney required the addition of the ordinance upon reviewing the IGA with Fayette County. The ordinance is very straightforward on how elections are run in the state of Georgia. Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel asked for a motion to approve the ordinance; Council Member Kay Brumbelow made a Motion to approve the ordinance as presented, and Council Member Todd Speer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

New Business

Proclamation – Recognizing the Month of April 2023 as Brooks Safe Digging Month

Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel read the proclamation stating that the Town of Brooks recognizes the month of April 2023 as Brooks Safe Digging Month. Matt Bergen, Fayette County Project Manager, Environment Management, was present to receive the proclamation on behalf of Fayette County.

Discuss Imposing Fine(s) Related to Storm Water Maintenance

M. Ungaro reported there had been complaints regarding stormwater drainage issues due to lawn clippings and leaves within the town. A notice was included in the latest trash bill regarding Section 15-1.02 of the Brooks Code of Ordinances, which states that it is unlawful for any person to deposit, accumulate, throw, or leave lawn or garden trash (without consent) upon the property of others, on Town property, public right of ways or ditches along the public right of ways, streams, or within fifty feet of one's property line or within one hundred feet of another person's residence. M. Ungaro asked Mayor Pro Tempore and Council if the problem continues with the same resident(s) to potentially invoke a penalty pursuant to Section 11 Violations, Enforcement, and Penalties, 10.2 Penalties subsection (4) Civil Penalties. After much discussion, Mayor Tempore Scott Israel suggested that the Town staff not be responsible for issuing citations but instead have the County Marshalls issue citations. Council Member Brian Davis asked if our current IGA with the County includes these types of services from the Marshalls office. M. Ungaro replied that he would look into the IGA and request the addition of that service if not already listed in the agreement. Council Member Todd Speer suggested adding a notice to the resident's water bill and posting it on the Town's website.

Review and Adopt the Town of Brooks Seat Belt Policy

M. Ungaro reported that GIRMA recently did an unannounced inspection audit and found that the Town did not have a seat belt policy. A seat belt policy is required per the terms and agreement of the Town's policy with GIRMA. The proposed seat belt policy requires all employees to wear seat belts when operating a company-owned vehicle or any vehicle on company premises or company business. The policy also requires seat belts to be worn whenever a personal vehicle is used for company business. Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel asked for a motion to approve the policy; Council Member Ted Britt made a Motion to approve the seat belt policy as presented; Council Member Brian Davis seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Review and Adopt the Town of Brooks Workplace Harassment Policy

M. Ungaro reported that in addition to the Seat Belt Policy, GIRMA requires a workplace harassment policy. The proposed workplace harassment policy defines workplace & sexual harassment and provides examples of the prohibited workplace and sexual harassment. Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel asked for a motion to approve the policy; Council Member Todd Speer made a Motion to approve the workplace harassment policy as presented; Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Discuss the Addition of a Flashing Intersection Sign at Brooks Rd & 85 Connector

M. Ungaro requested approval to add two flashing intersection signs, northbound and southbound, on 85 Connector at Brooks Rd., using 2017 SPLOST funds. The estimated cost for each sign is \$1,600. The positive results seen from flashing intersection signs at 85 Connector and Morgan Mill have prompted this request in hopes of reducing speeding along 85 Connector. Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel asked for a motion to approve using 2017 SPLOST funds to purchase two flashing intersection signs for 85 Connector, and Brooks Rd intersection; Council Member Ted Britt made a Motion to approve the flashing intersection signs as presented; Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Committee Reports:

Mayor's Report: Mayor Langford could not attend and asked that Mayor Pro Tempore read his report.:

SPLOST 2023

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the SPLOST vote recently. I was thrilled and pleasantly surprised at the margin by which it passed county-wide, and while I have not seen the Brooks precinct figures, I hope they even beat the county's as a whole. Sales taxes are the cheapest kinds of taxes to have, because folks who live other places and don't benefit from them help to pay a large portion of them -- in Fayette, approximately 1/3. I learned many lessons at my late father's knee, but one I learned from him as a young adult, was, "Son, ALWAYS vote for a sales tax!" I've followed that advice, and I appreciate the others who supported the SPLOST.

Mayor's Breakfast

Four of the five Fayette mayors breakfasted together on Thursday, April 6. We try to gather once a month just to visit and build relationships with each other. We all believe that if we are friends as well as colleagues, it can only help in smoothing relations between our respective municipalities and between the municipalities and the county, and I think those relationships have benefitted Brooks several times, perhaps most recently in the once-every-ten-year sales tax split negotiations a year or so ago.

Friends of Historic Woolsey

I've been asked, by virtue of my position as Brooks's mayor, to serve on the board of Friends of Historic Woolsey, a not-for-profit dedicated to preserving the 1880s Wooley Baptist Church building and cemetery in the heart of the community. I attended my first meeting in late March. This is an ex officio position that will devolve to whoever holds my current office after I no longer do. I am excited about this, for Brooks, Woolsey, and Inman are really the last mostly undeveloped, still largely rural areas of Fayette, and I like to see as much of each community's history and heritage preserved as possible.

Planning and Zoning: M. Ungaro reported a rezoning request has been received; the property is currently zoned as RA (residential agriculture), and the owner is requesting it to be rezoned to TR (Town Residential), which would allow the 5 acres to be split into two 2 ½ acre lots; the property is located at 185 Gable Rd. The request will be presented at next month's meeting.

Recreation: D. Holliman shared the 2023 sponsorship opportunities and build the legacy one brick at a time fundraising opportunity; 4x8 bricks are \$100, and 8x8 bricks are \$250. The construction start day of June 1st is on track. BAR will hold its Brooks Day on Saturday, May 13th, with vendors, food, and baseball games and then dinner and a concert from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. M. Ungaro suggested BAR contact the Sherriff's office for traffic control and to have volunteers assist in directing visitors to park along the railroad tracks at an angle to increase parking capacity.

Town Clerk Report: L. Spohr reported that all 2023 Occupational Business licenses had been received and paid.

Library: K. Bradley stated that library traffic has picked up, and she has continued to deaccessed outdated books (1960 to 2007). K. Bradley requested the approval to de-access 381 books valued at \$497.75. Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel asked for a motion to approve the deaccession of the 381 library books: Council Member Kay Brumbelow made a Motion to approve the deaccession, and Council Member Brian Davis seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Finance Officer's Report: L. Spohr reviewed the March financials; LOST and SPLOST are at an increase over the same time last year. SPLOST YTD over last year is at an increase of 11.09%, and LOST YTD over this time is at an increase of 13.94%. All anticipated tax revenues are tracking well against FY2023 budget goals. L. Spohr said the FY2024 Budget would be presented at the next Council meeting and that the proposed budget will reflect a millage rate of 1.207. L. Spohr reported that the ARPA program has ended, and the Town will not receive revenue for FY2024. With the passing of the 2023 SPLOST, a new checking account has been set up to receive funds via wire.

Town Manager Report:

Cemetery

Recently a question was raised about the municipal cemeteries needing to be registered with the Secretary of State. Our Town Attorney researched the issue and stated that registration is necessary only if perpetual care is provided. The Brooks Memorial Gardens Cemetery does not provide perpetual care. Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel asked what the definition of cemetery perpetual care was. M. Ungaro stated that perpetual care is when a cemetery provides services for repairs, maintenance, and upkeep of cemetery plots.

Brooks Market

The next market is this Saturday, April 22nd. The Brooks Woman's Club will hold its Spring Plant sale in coordination with the Market. Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel asked about parking for safety reasons due to last year's sale; M. Ungaro replied that the parking situation had already been addressed for that specific reason.

Transportation

Recently, a request was made by the resident at 794 Hwy 85 Connector to have a "Blind Drive" sign installed for the northbound traffic to warn drivers of the driveways ahead. I have consulted with the County Engineer and the head of the County Road Department regarding this. While we do have one of these signs on Huckaby Rd., these signs are no longer identified in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) as suitable for installation. I informed the resident requesting the signage that we cannot accommodate them.

Any Other: None

Any Other Business: None; Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Israel stated that with no further business to discuss, the public portion of the meeting is closed at 7:33 p.m. to begin the Executive Session.

Adjourn: There being no further business to discuss this evening, and the Executive Session is closed, Council Member Ted Britt offered a Motion to adjourn; Council Member Todd Speer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lorey Spohr", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lorey Spohr
Town Clerk

ADDENDUM

On Monday, April 24, 2023, M. Ungaro requested the approval of Resolution 2023-03 via email to Mayor Pro-Tempore Scott Israel and Council.

Resolution 2023-03 – A Resolution to Adopt the Fayette County 2022 Annual Report on Fire Services Impact Fees (FY2022), Including Comprehensive Plan Amendments for Updates to the Capital Improvements Element and Short-Term Work Program (FY2023-Fy2027) – Brooks Subsection.

Council Members Todd Speer, Kay Brumbelow, and Brian Davis approved the resolution via email.