

**Council Meeting
Minutes
July 10, 2023**

Present: Mayor Ellwanger, MPT Krieger, CP Bratton, CP Williamson, CP Spitler, Clerk Elisa Rowe, Attorney Joe Reitman
Citizens: Susan Oliveto

I. CALL TO ORDER: The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:10pm

II. INVOCATION:

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Lead by Mayor Ellwanger

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

May 1st council meeting: (June 5th meeting cancelled) CP Williamson made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 1st meeting.

Motion: CP Williamson Second: CP Bratton Approved: 5-0-0

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Update:

1. **123 Porter Street** – Attorney Joe Reitman stated that judging by the pictures that Code enforcement took, things have not improved and his suggestions is to proceed with bids for clean-up on the property. Any/all bids will be reviewed at the August meeting.
2. **4181 Hwy 142 (old fertilizer building)** – Attorney Joe Reitman stated that he has talked to the owner and he has stated that he is having some hardship with getting it cleaned up but that he has had the roof looked at and getting bids on it being replaced/repaired.
3. **4272 Hwy 142 (Mock property)** – Attorney Joe Reitman stated that Mr. Mock has done over \$100,000 of work on the outside of the house and on the out buildings and plans to do inside work once he can find a good electrician. He is currently out of state on a cruise but Joe stated that he feels that he will continue to do the repairs and for now the Town can hold off on taking him to court.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Millage Rate: The Rollback rate is 0.861 which would mean an increase of \$724 (3.85%); however, if the Mayor & Council choose to keep the 2022 millage rate of 0.997 there would be an increase of \$3808 (20.41%) and the required 3 public hearings must be held. If the Mayor & Council choose to approve the rollback rater of 0.861, the 5-year history will be advertised prior to adoption. The advertisement must be published no less than 7 days prior to the meeting where the millage rate is adopted. If the roll-back rate is approved, the 5-year history will run in the July 16th edition and approval rate can be made any time on or after July 24th. The County would like to have the paperwork submitted before the end of July. Clerk Elisa Rowe stated that with the roll back rate there would be an increase, but the increase would be even more significant if the Town choose to keep the millage rate from last year of .0.997. Mayor Ellwanger stated that the Town

tries to keep the millage rate as low as possible for the citizens and recommends the roll back rate. CP Bratton made a motion to approve the roll back rate of 0.861. Clerk Elisa Rowe stated that the 5-year history will be advertised but we need to set a meeting to adopt the roll back rate. The Mayor, CP Spitler and CP Williamson stated that they would be available to attend a meeting on Monday, July 24th for the adoption meeting.

Motion: CP Bratton

Second: MPT Krieger

Approved: 5-0-0

- B. Donation agreement between the Town of Newborn and Jeff Eubanks for 1.54 acres at 173 Timberlake Drive.** Attorney Joe Reitman stated that he has drawn up a donation agreement between the Town of Newborn and Mr. Eubanks for the property in question to be donated to the Town if it meets with the Mayor and Council's approval. Mayor Ellwanger stated that the Town's expense would be whatever the paving may cost, a farm fence, along with a smaller pavilion, smaller butterfly garden and maybe a few benches and picnic tables. Mayor Ellwanger added that hopefully by this fall we will have everything taken care of and it would be a good time for the paving also; and by next spring it should all be in place. Mayor Ellwanger stated that Newton County and the municipalities are becoming Archway Community with University of Georgia. We will be one of seven counties/towns and when we do that, we will have a University of Georgia graduate student who will work for the County and will have an office in Covington for a year. Mayor Ellwanger added that the Town will be able to put forward projects to the University of Georgia and we will get a student to design a park and that will be their position to take and run with it. They can design the park but we can talk to the citizens and get ideas and submit. We will want something that is small maintenance (parking for maybe six (6) vehicles). Attorney Joe Reitman stated if the Mayor and Council are comfortable with the agreement that he drew up, you will approve in principal and will authorize the Mayor, the Clerk and the Town attorney to move forward. MPT Krieger made a motion to approve the agreement drawn up between the Town and Jeff Eubanks for land for use of a park or greenspace and to authorize Mayor, Clerk and Attorney Reitman to move forward with all necessary legal documents.

Motion: MPT Krieger

Second: CP Bratton

Approved: 5-0-0

- C. Reminder: Century Bike Ride will be coming through Newborn and using pavilion as a rest stop on Saturday, July 29th. Volunteers needed.** Mayor Ellwanger reminded everyone that the bike ride will once again be using the pavilion as a rest stop. We need volunteers and will serve watermelon, sandwiches and plenty of water. If you would like to volunteer, be there by 7:30am, and it should be over by noon.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Ellwanger adjourned the meeting at 7:45pm

Motion: MPT Krieger

Second: CP Spitler

Approved: 5-0-0