

Town of Bethlehem

Council meeting

April 4, 2022 @ 7 p.m.

Present: Mayor Sandy McNab; Councilmen, Tommy Buchanan, Doug Koestel, Scott Morgan, Bryan Bell and Dan Wages; Clerk, Kathy Bridges; Attorney Ron Bennett

Visitors: Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Johnson; Morgan Ervin with the Barrow Journal newspaper

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with a prayer by Mayor Sandy McNab.

Dan Wages made the motion to approve the March minutes and with a second by Scott Morgan the motion passed with Bryan Bell and Doug Koestel voting for the motion and Tommy Buchanan against.

The agricultural property of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Johnson of 898 Harrison Mill Road was first on the agenda under old business. Councilman Scott Morgan read a prepared statement. Attorney Ron Bennett informed the decision to enforce or not to enforce the code violations was up to the council. Bryan Bell made the motion to enforce the violation through a court order. The motion died with no second. Tommy Buchanan made the motion to dismiss the issue permanently and Dan Wages seconded. Doug Koestel voted for the motion and Bryan Bell against. Scott Morgan refrained from voting and stated he wanted the record to reflect the fact that council had decided not to follow the advice of their attorney, Ron Bennett and that he wanted a copy of his presentation recorded in the minutes. Tommy Buchanan said he wanted the Johnson's presentation included in the March minutes and the clerk said a hard copy was included with the hard copy of the minutes.

The council discussed the rescue funds budget and Dan Wages made the motion to accept the budget as written and sign the budget resolution, Doug Koestel seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The council discussed the handicap swingset bid and the prices for benches and picnic tables for the playground. Dan Wages made a motion to accept the bid from KorKat for the handicap swingset with grass mats for a price of \$15,869.86 and to get bids from Treetop for a 6 foot bench like the one previously ordered from Treetop and for an 8 foot handicap accessible picnic table. Doug Koestel seconded and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.

The Mayor showed photos of the storm drainpipe on Joseph Street and stated the pipe on Carl-Bethlehem Road before the old Bethlehem Elementary School and the pipe at the curve of King Avenue all had similar problems. He asked if the council would like estimates on all three and the council agreed.

The council discussed the T-SPLOST referendum requested by the City of Winder. Attorney Bennett said the county must first approve such a request.

The clerk showed the cost of a changing table explaining a patron had requested one for the community room bathroom. The Koala Kare Plastic/Poly changing table cost \$352.99 at Quill.com and would fit in a stall in the women's bathroom. Doug Koestel priced the same table at Amazon for \$268 and made the motion to buy it from Amazon. Dan Wages seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

At 8:06 Doug Koestel made the motion to go into executive session to discuss employment and with a second by Dan Wages, the vote was unanimous. The motion to go back into regular session was made at 8:15 by Scott Morgan, a second by Doug Koestel and a unanimous vote.

Tommy Buchanan stated that elected officials were not supposed to work for the city according to the Georgia Municipal Association's attorney. The Mayor was to ask employee, Jerome Morton if he would take over the grass cutting duties. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 with a motion by Tommy Buchanan, a second by Dan Wages and a unanimous vote.