MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF RICHMOND HILL  
MARCH 15, 2011

Present from City Council: Jimmy Hires, Mayor Pro-Tem; Councilmembers: Marilyn Hodges, Van Hunter, Russ Carpenter

Staff Present: Michael Melton, City Manager; Ursula Lee, City Clerk; Steve Scholar, Director of Planning & Zoning; Billy Reynolds, Police Chief; Andy Burriss, Fire Inspector; Harvey Lashley, Park Director; Bob Whitmarsh, Finance Director; Rick Lauver, CH2MHiIl OMI; Randy Dykes, Sr. Bldg. Inspector

Visitors: Jamie Parker, Leigh Corbin, Phil Corbin, William Jeffers, Sawyer Duckworth, Andrew Martinez, Alex Benjamin, Cheryl Holesovsky, Nathan Martinez, Matthew Parker, Beah Corbin, Jacob Mabrey, Richard Bensman, Kaleb Orchard, Chris Sean, Rhodes Seeger, Travis Burke, Terry Coleman, Billy Albritton, Chris Sheppard, Matt Quinn, Cheryl Quinn, Keith Quinn, John Reynolds, Josh Keller, Civility Bowling, Steve Weiss

Mayor Pro-Tem Jimmy Hires called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. and Councilmember Carpenter gave the invocation. The pledge of allegiance was given.

Swearing in of CVB Board Member John Reynolds. Mayor Pro-Tem Hires gave the CVB Oath to Mr. John Reynolds as follows:

Oath of Convention and Visitors Bureau Member

I, John Reynolds, do solemnly pledge to uphold all of the rules and regulations of the City of Richmond Hill Convention & Visitors Bureau, to use good judgment as to the expenditure of hotel/motel tax funds to attract visitors and businesses to the City of Richmond Hill, and to help promote the general welfare and growth of the City. I further pledge to the best of my ability to always present the City of Richmond Hill to all who come here in the best light possible, so help me God.

Mayor Pro-Tem Hires congratulated and thanked Mr. Reynolds for donating his time to the CVB Board.

Presentation to Eagle Scouts. Councilmember Russ Carpenter presented Eagle Scouts Forrest P. Corbin and Matthew Quinn with a Proclamation of Recognition for the Eagle Scout Rank.

PROCLAMATION OF RECOGNITION

Presented to: Forrest P. Corbin

In recognition of: Achievement of Eagle Scout Rank

WHEREAS: the Boy Scouts of America was founded on February 8, 1910, and has grown to be a vital force in the development of our youth through its many programs which encourage the ability of its members to do things for themselves and others; and
WHEREAS: one of the major objectives in the Scouting program is to develop citizenship through community involvement, and in addition to working for citizenship merit badges, Scouts are actively involved in community service projects such as Salvation Army Christmas Bag Campaign, clean-up projects, paper drives, civic ceremonies, and parades; and

WHEREAS: we appreciate the achievements and service of Eagle Scout Forrest Corbin, a resident of this community and a member of Troop 400.

NOW, THEREFORE, I E. Harold Fowler, Mayor of the City of Richmond Hill, do tender this Proclamation of Recognition to Eagle Scout Corbin, for successfully achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Richmond Hill, Georgia to be affixed this 15th day of March, 2011.

PROCLAMATION OF RECOGNITION

Presented to: Matthew Quinn

In recognition of: Achievement of Eagle Scout Rank

WHEREAS: the Boy Scouts of America was founded on February 8, 1910, and has grown to be a vital force in the development of our youth through its many programs which encourage the ability of its members to do things for themselves and others; and

WHEREAS: one of the major objectives in the Scouting program is to develop citizenship through community involvement, and in addition to working for citizenship merit badges, Scouts are actively involved in community service projects such as Salvation Army Christmas Bag Campaign, clean-up projects, paper drives, civic ceremonies, and parades; and

WHEREAS: we appreciate the achievements and service of Eagle Scout Matthew Quinn, a resident of this community and a member of Troop 400.

NOW, THEREFORE, I E. Harold Fowler, Mayor of the City of Richmond Hill, do tender this Proclamation of Recognition to Eagle Scout Quinn, for successfully achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Richmond Hill, Georgia to be affixed this 15th day of March, 2011.

Council congratulated both Scouts on their achievements.

Minutes of the regular meeting held March 1, 2011 were approved as submitted in a motion by Councilmember Hodges. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hunter and carried by all.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Administration and Personnel: Ursula Lee

Nothing to report.

Public Safety:

Police Department: Chief Billy Reynolds

1. Monthly report submitted. Chief Reynolds stated everything was going fine
with the department and he would be glad to answer any questions. Chief Reynolds commented that last Monday the department had taken over the Resource Position as well as traffic control for the high school on Harris Trail for the remainder of the year and would negotiate something with the Board of Education for next year.

**Fire Department: Chief Vernon Rushing**

1. Monthly report submitted. Inspector Andy Burriess told Council he would be glad to answer any questions.

**Public Works: Rick Lauver**

1. Monthly report submitted. Mr. Lauver told Council he would be glad to answer any questions. Councilmember Hodges asked when the big trash pick up would be for Ga. Cities Week. Mr. Lauver replied it would be the week before Ga. Cities Week.

**Parks, Recreation and Culture: Harvey Lashley**

1. Monthly report submitted. Mr. Lashley reported everything was going fine in the park and he would be glad to answer any questions.

**Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement: Steve Scholar**

1. Approval/Disapproval of request by Brian Snyder, Verizon Wireless/Cellular Sales for a variance of 185 sq. ft. on building signs and total square footage in a C-1, neighborhood commercial district. The location of the store will be 70 Exchange St. Mr. Scholar told Council there would be three signs with a total of 221 sq ft the city ordinance allows a total of 36 sq ft which is why they are requesting a variance for 185 sq ft. Mr. Scholar told Council all documentation that was presented to the Planning Commission is in their packet. A Public Hearing was held with no one in opposition. The Pooler Store does have the same signs Mr. Snyder is requesting for this location. The sign would be illuminated 24 hours a day; the sign does not face Richmond Place. Mr. Josh Keller explained that this was how the Verizon Signs were layed out and unfortunately they did not have a choice. Mr. Keller noted they have been in Richmond Hill for eight years.

Councilmember Carpenter asked Mr. Keller if the Victory Drive sign was the same size as their proposed sign. Mr. Keller stated he did not know the exact footage but it was very similar to their request.

Councilmember Hunter commented that he didn’t think it was very professional of a company to come before Council and state that if they didn’t get their way they would pack up and move to another city. Mr. Keller thanked Councilmember Hunter for his comments but he had no control over the signage, it is what it is.
Mr. Keller noted that they have to ask for variances just about everywhere they go.

Councilmember Carpenter commented that he just did not see a valid reason for this variance. Councilmember Hodges commented that the size of the sign is almost the same size as a billboard.

Councilmember Hunter suggested to Mr. Keller that the request be tabled tonight and that they go back and rework the variance request and present it at the next Council meeting. Mr. Keller agreed to table the request.

Councilmember Hunter made a motion to table the request from Brian Snyder, Verizon Wireless/Cellular Sales allowing them time to rework the variance request until the next Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter and carried by all.

2. Approval/Disapproval of request by Blanchard & Calhoun for the site plan and building elevations of a new Verizon Wireless & Cellular Store to be built at 70 Exchange St., Richmond Place Village. It is zoned C-1, neighborhood commercial. Mr. Scholar told Council the site plan does meet all requirements of the ordinance. The Planning & Zoning Commission does recommend approval.

Councilmember Hunter made a motion to approve the request by Blanchard & Calhoun for the site plan and building elevations of a new Verizon Wireless & Cellular Store to be built at 70 Exchange St., Richmond Place Village. It is zoned C-1, neighborhood commercial. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter and carried by all.

3. Approval/Disapproval of an off premises consumption of beer only alcoholic beverage license for Love’s Travel Stops at 8436 Ford Avenue. The new manager is Jeffrey Steve Smart. Mr. Scholar told Council this was due to a change in management and all background checks were complete.

Councilmember Hodges made a motion to approve the request for an off premises consumption of beer only alcoholic beverage license for Love’s Travel Stops at 8436 Ford Avenue. The new manager is Jeffrey Steve Smart. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hunter and carried by all.

4. Code Enforcement Report. Mr. Scholar told Council it was a standard report and would be glad to answer any questions.

Councilmember Carpenter asked about the two abated properties that were foreclosed on; if there was anything the city could do. Mr. Melton told Council he would like to get with Mr. Scholar on the two properties and get back with Council at the next meeting with their suggestions. Council agreed that would be fine.
**Finance Director: Bob Whitmarsh**

1. Approve/Disapprove January, 2011 financial statement. Mr. Whitmarsh told Council the New Year was taking off in good form. Just keep in mind that the tax revenues that are coming in are for year 2010.

   Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the January, 2011 financial statement. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hodges and carried by all.

**City Manager’s Topics: Mike Melton**

1. Discussion of placement of advertisement in Fort Stewart & Hunter Army Airfield Post Guide and Telephone Directory. City Manager Melton told Council that Mayor Fowler ask him to show the Directory to Council and see if this was something Council may be interested in doing. A full page color ad would cost around $3,600 and a smaller ad about $1,500. We did not budget for this. After a brief discussion about circulation and location of distribution it was decided to see if the CVB Board would be interested in placing an ad.

   Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to direct the CVB to consider placing an ad in the Fort Stewart & Hunter Army Airfield Post Guide and Telephone Directory. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hunter and carried by all.

2. Proposed Transportation Investment Act projects. City Manager Melton presented Council with a proposed list of roads for the project. Mr. Melton noted that list was too extensive and Sr. Bldg. Inspector Randy Dykes would explain why the list was too extensive. Mr. Dykes told Council the LMIG was taking the place of the resurfacing that had been done in the past under LARP. A criterion has to be met for this project. A lot of the proposed roads did not meet the criteria under LMIG. A list of the proposed projects has to be turned in by the end of month. We have taken all the suggestions and compiled a list from those suggestions. Once the list goes in it has to be passed. If this is not done before August the city would have to share in that cost up to 50%.

   Councilmember Hodges made a motion to approve the Proposed Transportation Investment Act projects as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter and carried by all.
Public Relations:

Nothing to report.

Special Committees:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Approval/Disapproval of the “Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control” ordinance.

   Councilmember Hodges made a motion to approve the Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control” ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter and carried by all.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Relay for Life Committee to address Council. Mr. Billy Albritton asked Council if they could be allowed to put banners up in front of Cedar Street, CVS, and at the corner of Hwy. 17 and Harris Trail to promote Relay for Life. The event would be held April 1st, and everyone is invited. We are also asking Council to waive the $25.00 non refundable banner fees.

   City Manager Melton stated he did not think Council could authorize signs in a DOT right of way. Mr. Albritton stated they are interested in putting it up at the Cedar Street location. Mr. Melton noted that if signs were put up in DOT right of ways DOT would pick them up.

   Mr. Albritton stated they would like to put the signs up beginning March 16th Thru April 1st.

   Councilmember Hunter made a motion to approve the request from the Relay for Life Committee to put up banners in front of Cedar Street, CVS, and at the corner of Hwy. 17 and Harris Trail, not to be placed in DOT right of ways. The banner fees will be waived. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter and carried by all.
Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to recess. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hodges and carried by all.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 P. M. in a motion by Councilmember Carpenter, seconded by Councilmember Hodges and carried by all.

Respectfully submitted,

Ursula G. Lee  
City Clerk