



**CITY OF RICHMOND HILL
TELECONFERENCE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

**Tuesday, May 05, 2020
7:00 PM**

**Richmond Hill City Hall Council Chambers
40 Richard Davis Drive
Richmond Hill, Georgia
31324**

Present from City Council: Russ Carpenter, *Mayor*; *Councilmembers:* Kristi Cox, Mark Ott, Steve Scholar, and Robbie Ward

Staff Present: Chris Lovell, *City Manager*; Scott Allison, *Assistant City Manager*; Robert Whitmarsh, *Finance Director*; Dawnne Greene, *City Clerk*

OPENING STATEMENT FROM MAYOR CARPENTER REGARDING COVID-19

Good evening,

I would like to express my gratitude to the residents and businesses of Richmond Hill for taking the threat of COVID-19 seriously. This is an incredibly difficult time for all of us, but through it all, I am incredibly proud of how our Richmond Hill community has come together. So many friends and neighbors have stepped up with courage to help mitigate this pandemic and its effects on this community. As we transition to the new normal that we've been longing for, I would like to share the following recommendations from Dr. Lawton Davis from the Department of Public Health:

"Now is not the time to let down our guard and assume we can go back to business as usual. The social distancing measures enacted in our area have helped. We've seen fewer cases of illness and fewer deaths than in other parts of our state and our country, and that's great news. But in the absence of a vaccine, there are still many, many people in our area who have never been infected and are still susceptible to illness with severe complications. We continue to see new cases and deaths reported in our state every day, and we're adding to our regional case count as well. The COVID-19 pandemic is not over."

"For these reasons, we strongly recommend that everyone wear a face mask or cloth covering when in public, especially indoors. If you don't need to go out, we urge you stay

home. If you're 65 years old or older, or if you have chronic health conditions, you're still under an executive order to shelter-in-place until mid-June. We're all weary of these social distancing rules and we'd all like to get back to normal, but we have to move slowly to avoid seeing a new surge in cases that could overwhelm our healthcare community and cost many lives.”

Looking ahead, together we will continue to face unprecedented trials. We will experience many inconveniences, challenges, and frustrations. Please be assured that your local leadership has and will continue to protect our residents and businesses while navigating these challenges. If you are not one of those who are fearful of the COVID-19 outbreak, I ask you to be sensitive to others who are, recognizing that individual health and personal circumstances are different for each person. The award-winning poet Sonia Renee Taylor said, “There’s a way in which fear can be one of two things – the great divider or the great gatherer.” COVID-19 wins if we let the dilemma between health and economic survival divide friends and neighbors.

This virus has spotlighted the most people in our community, but it gives us the opportunity to make a positive impact on their quality of life during this pandemic. Assistance with delivering groceries, checking on isolated friends by calling or texting and refraining from purchasing large quantities of items that are in short supply that people who are sick or disabled need to survive will go a long way to unite and lessen the divide.

Fear brings out the worst in us, but generosity of spirit brings out the best in us and continues to unify the Richmond Hill community. We – as individuals and as a community - will be transformed by the good that we did during this time of crisis. Let’s continue to provide hope to those who are fearful by reaching out in creative ways to lift spirits in this time of social distancing. We truly are all in this together.

Thank You.

Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Councilmember Ott gave the opening invocation. Councilmember Scholar led the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of minutes of special called meeting March 30, 2020.

Councilmember Scholar made a motion to approve the March 30, 2020 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cox. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

Approval of minutes of meeting April 7, 2020.

Councilmember Cox made a motion to approve the April 7, 2020 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ward. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

PROCLAMATION OF MAY AS HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

Mayor Carpenter presented the proclamation declaring May as historic preservation month.

DEPARTMENTS

Planning and Zoning: Scott Allison

1. Planning Commission / Architectural Review Board Verbal Report

Mr. Allison, stated that the ARB reviewed a building elevation and site plan for a new Geovista Credit Union on Ford Avenue, specifically at the current location of the Geovista ATM.

2. Approval/Disapproval of the preliminary plat for Medline, to be located at Belfast Commerce Park, Parcel H, map and parcel 049-002.

Councilmember Ward made a motion to approve the preliminary plat for Medline, to be located at Belfast Commerce Park, Parcel H, map and parcel 049-002. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Scholar. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

3. Approval/Disapproval of the preliminary right-of-way plat submitted by Raydient Places + Properties for the access road to Medline, to be located at Belfast Commerce Park, Parcel H, map and parcel 049-002.

Councilmember Ott made a motion to approve the preliminary right-of-way plat submitted by Raydient Places + Properties for the access road to Medline, to be located at Belfast Commerce Park, Parcel H, map and parcel 049-002. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cox. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

CITY MANAGER TOPICS

1. Approval/Disapproval of 2019 General Fund budget amendments.

Councilmember Scholar made a motion to approve the 2019 General Fund budget amendments. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ward. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

2. Approval/Disapproval of the Contract Award for the First Street Extension Project.

Councilmember Ward made a motion to approve the Contract Award for the First Street Extension Project. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Scholar. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

3. Approval/Disapproval of Change Order #1 for the First Street Extension Project to add additional drainage improvements at the Camellia Street intersection area.

Councilmember Ward made a motion to approve the Contract Award for the First Street Extension Project to add additional drainage improvements at the Camellia Street intersection area. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cox. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

4. Approval/Disapproval of a \$15,026 expenditure from the Conference Center Escrow account to purchase new computers for the Richmond Hill City Center.

Councilmember Cox made a motion to approve the Contract Award for a \$15,026 expenditure from the Conference Center Escrow account to purchase new computers for

the Richmond Hill City Center. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Scholar. Motion carried in the affirmative by councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

COMMUNICATIONS

Please follow the City's Facebook page (@WeAreRichmondHill) and visit our website (www.RichmondHill-Ga.gov) for important information about COVID-19 and how it affects you, your family, and this community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Carpenter stated that there were no public comments submitted. He then asked the Councilmembers if they would like to make any closing statements.

Councilmember Cox reminded everyone that this week is Teacher Appreciation Week. She also expressed her continued appreciation for the city's first responders.

Councilmember Ward thanked the city staff, his colleagues and first responders as they continue to navigate the challenges of the pandemic.

Councilmember Ott asked everyone to keep high school seniors in mind as they deal with the pandemic's impact on their graduation celebrations.

Councilmember Scholar encouraged everyone to continue following social distancing guidelines. He also expressed his thanks to first responders.

Mayor Carpenter announced that graduating seniors will be recognized on digital signs at First Bank of Coastal Georgia, Coastal Electric, and the digital billboard at the crossroad of Highway 144 and Highway 17.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM in a motion by Councilmember Ott. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ward. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Cox, Ott, Scholar, and Ward.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawnne Greene
City Clerk