The Lyerly Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 14, 2018 at Lyerly Town Hall. Those in attendance were:

Jim Ferguson, Mayor

Gwen Fisher

Phil Brooks

Juanita Baker

Shirley Davis

August 14, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ferguson at 7:00 pm.

***New Business:***

*Minutes –* Mayor Ferguson asked if anyone had any questions about the minutes. Phil Brooks made a motion to approve the July 6th work session and July 16th meeting minutes. Juanita Baker seconded. All in favor.

*Alcohol License–* Mayor Ferguson said that we have Chirag Patel with us tonight. He has made an application to have the liquor license from the liquor store, where currently Tony Patel holds the license, put into his name. So he will be taking over the business without any changes. It will still be retail liquor, beer and wine. He is required to be here by our ordinance. If you all have any questions for him, that’s why he is here. Juanita Baker asked if we had run a background check. Mayor Ferguson said that the way this works is that he will present us with his application to the state of Georgia and then we provide him with a provisional liquor license until the state finishes their investigation and grants him a license. Their investigation will include everything that we require. Mayor Ferguson then said that if no one has any more questions or objections, we will grant him a provisional liquor license. Phil Brooks made a motion to grant Chirag Patel a provisional liquor license. Juanita Baker seconded. All in favor. Mayor Ferguson welcomed Chirag Patel to Lyerly and told him that if he needs anything, to stop by his office or give him a call. And on his way out to let Clerk Sally Kerce make a copy of his state paperwork.

*Millage Rate –* Mayor Ferguson said that we have all had a week to think about the millage rate. We can either leave it the same (10.142), go with the recommended rollback rate (10.151) which does not require a public hearing or we can raise it beyond the rollback rate which requires a public hearing. Gwen Fisher asked how much would that be on the average home in Lyerly. Mayor Ferguson said that he hasn’t done the math but he believes that overall, an estimated guess would say maybe it would bring in an extra $2,000. Gwen Fisher said she was asking per home. Mayor Ferguson said that his taxes are pretty high because his house is pretty big but his would probably go up around $10 maximum. Juanita Baker asked if that’s what it would be if we went up to the rollback rate. Mayor Ferguson said yes. Juanita Baker said if we stay down, we wouldn’t have to have that hearing. Mayor Ferguson said that we would only have to have a public hearing if we set it higher than the rollback. For instance, if we set it a 14%, we would have to have a public hearing but if we go up to the rollback rate of 10.151, we don’t have to have a hearing. Juanita Baker then said that if we leave it same, we don’t have to have a hearing. Mayor Ferguson said no, we do not. Juanita Baker said she thinks we should do that. Gwen Fisher said she thinks that we should go to the rollback rate. Phil Brooks agreed. Shirley Davis said that it is alright with her too. Gwen Fisher said that last year it was carried over the same, wasn’t it. Mayor Ferguson said that the millage rate has been the same for the past two years. Gwen Fisher said that with all of the improvements that we are doing to the water system, it isn’t a bad idea to go up. Gwen Fisher made a motion to set the millage rate at the rollback rate of 10.151. Phil Brooks seconded. All in favor.

Jimmy Espy then asked if this would generate about the same amount of money as last year. Mayor Ferguson said yes.

*Bank Statements –* Mayor Ferguson said that the council should have a resolution in front of them that will make Phil Brooks do work. This outlines the way that the Mayor Pro Tem will go about reviewing the monthly financial statements and gives him recourse if he finds any irregularities and also instructions on requesting more information. It states the time that he has to review, etc. Basically, Phil Brooks is the third layer of financial oversight and if he wants to, he can ask to see whatever he wants to see. We will give him bank statements and credit card statements every month. This will not change any of the existing financial or budgeting procedures that we do now. As far as the council approving changes to the budget or anything like that, it just involves Phil Brooks in the loop. Clerk Sally Kerce will review the bank and credit card statements and then the Mayor will review them and sign them and then Phil Brooks will review them and sign them. Mayor Ferguson added that we came up with this because when Chrysan Thomas did the audit, she felt like we needed another layer of oversight to make sure that everything is as transparent and incorruptible as possible. Mayor Ferguson asked if anyone has any discussion about the resolution. He said that this resolution also recognizes that the Town Charter authorizes the Council to appoint a Mayor Pro Tem but does not require it. So if a future council doesn’t select a Mayor Pro Tem, they are required by this ordinance to appoint a financial officer who will fulfill these duties. Juanita Baker asked what section that is in. Mayor Ferguson said that it is in section two. Juanita Baker made a motion to accept this resolution. Gwen Fisher seconded. All in favor.

*New Attorney –* Mayor Ferguson said that the council had already shaken hands with Louis Johnson, our new Town Attorney. He is from Rome. Mayor Ferguson added that they worked together as policemen at the City of Rome. He has been an attorney for three years. He has spent his entire life working in municipal government, so he knows how it works and he thinks that he will be a good fit for us. Juanita Baker said that we do have questions sometimes. Mayor Ferguson said that we have already put him to work.

Mayor Ferguson opened the floor to the public at 7:16pm.

Phil Brooks made the motion to adjourn. Juanita Baker seconded. All in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:17 pm.

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Mayor Town Clerk