

The Lyerly Town Council met for their agenda planning meeting on Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at Lyerly Town Hall. Those in attendance were:

Jim Ferguson, Mayor
Juanita Baker
Phil Brooks
Shirley Davis
Jim Gilliland

July 7, 2020

Mayor Ferguson began the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Ferguson said that due to the construction on Taliaferro Springs Road; we are going to have to move the waterline. Where it is now is, it has ended up under the road. Plus, the construction crew keeps breaking it while grading. They have broken it three or four times. Shirley Davis asked if they are paying for the repairs. Juanita Baker said that we should have moved it before they got started. Mayor Ferguson said that he doesn't think that we knew exactly where it was until they uncovered it and broke it. Now that we know where it is, we are going to move three meters which will make Jerry Hilton happy. He has been upset that his meter sits so far from his house but it will be closer when we move the waterline. We already have the pipe but parts and everything should cost us about \$2,500 plus a week of work for the guys.

Mayor Ferguson said that we need to pick a date to hopefully hold Down Home Day. Juanita Baker said that it needs to be the last Saturday in September. Mayor Ferguson said that we are going to go forward with it and hopefully we can have it. Juanita Baker said that she doesn't want to have it in October because that isn't when Lyerly's birthday is. Shirley Davis said that the last Saturday in September is the 26th. Everyone agreed to have it then. Sally Kerce asked if she need to go ahead and send out letters to the vendors or play it by ear. Mayor Ferguson said go ahead. Mayor Ferguson said that we will not have live entertainment. We will just play music over the PA system. He said that he will get in touch with the car show people and see if they can come. Jim Gilliland said that if the mayor will talk to Monk Groover, he'll talk it up for you. He is one of the organizers. Mayor Ferguson said that he talked with David Burkhalter last year.

Mayor Ferguson said that everyone should have financial reports to review before next week. Everyone also has minutes to review.

Shirley Davis asked the mayor if he had talked with people about their properties. Mayor Ferguson said that he hasn't yet. The old half burnt house on Ball Field Road has been completely burnt down and hauled off. He said that he wants written permission from Tony Patel to burn the house beside the Drive thru. Jim Gilliland asked what these people are paying the town to do this. Mayor Ferguson said that they aren't paying anything. Shirley Davis said we are doing it to just get rid of them. Jim Gilliland asked who owns them. Mayor Ferguson said that the one on Ball Field Road belonged to his father-in-law, Dave Johnston and the one we are doing next belongs to Tony Patel. Jim Gilliland said that they both can afford to have them burned. Mayor Ferguson said that it helps the fire department because they can use it for training. They have a bunch of new fire fighters that need to learn. It is a benefit to us. Also, the county is accepting everything that we haul off for free. All that it is costing us is to go over and scoop it up and haul it off and it is making the town look better. He added that he thinks

that it is a win, win whether they are paying or not but if the council thinks different, let him know. Juanita Baker said that it's good as long as they will keep it mowed after it's cleaned up. Jim Gilliland said that he has never heard of anyone's private property being cleaned up by the town, unless the town takes the property. He then asked if we are going to get the property. Mayor Ferguson said no. We are getting rid of an eye sore. Jim Gilliland then asked if that is just a freebie for the people that own it. Mayor Ferguson said again that we are getting rid of an eye sore so it's not a freebie. Jim Gilliland said that no one goes down through there (Ball Field Road). He said that it doesn't really look good on the mayor either; doing that for your father-in-law. Mayor Ferguson said that we will be doing Tony Patel's as well and he isn't related to Tony Patel. We are also going to go around and haul other peoples stuff off and he isn't related to any of those people. Shirley Davis told Jim Gilliland that they voted on this during the meeting that he missed. Jim Gilliland said that is what he figured. That it was voted on when he wasn't here. Mayor Ferguson said that he doesn't care who owns the property; these things need to be gone. Jim Gilliland said that he agrees but the people who own the property should clean them up. If you look at other cities, they condemn those properties and the owners have to either clean up the property or the town takes the property for cleaning them up. Mayor Ferguson said that we can do it that way or we can help people out. Shirley Davis said right now we are helping people out, aren't we? Jim Gilliland said that's good, maybe. Mayor Ferguson said that he feels like it is our responsibility to improve the quality of life for everyone that lives in town. If you have someone with a junkie yard and can't afford to have the stuff hauled off and we can help them out to improve their quality of life, their neighbor's quality of life and make the town look better, we should. Jim Gilliland then asked if Mayor Ferguson had looked into the legalities of doing this. Mayor Ferguson said that he talked with the town attorney and we can go after these people's properties but what are we going to do with it. Jim Gilliland said that we sell it. Shirley Davis said that if we ask these people to clean it and we offer to help them clean it but they still don't do anything to it, then we go further. Mayor Ferguson said that he agrees. We live in the third poorest county in the state of Georgia. These people don't have any money. If we want to be a mean aggressive town government and go after people's property, that's one way to go. Jim Gilliland said that if we can reduce people's taxes in this little town, it would be better than doing this. Mayor Ferguson said that we haven't raised taxes. Jim Gilliland said that he didn't say raise, he said reduce. Mayor Ferguson said that will be coming up this fall and we can talk about that but he thinks that the biggest tax burden in this county is coming from the county, not from us. Jim Gilliland said that is true. Mayor Ferguson said that he thinks that our taxes for the services that we provide are pretty reasonable. Juanita Baker said that we have to have enough money to run the town. Shirley Davis said that she does agree to take further action if they don't help us clean their property. Mayor Ferguson said yes. That is when we would take them to court. He said that he has sent a demand letter through the attorney to Tony Patel about cleaning up the old Lucky's and he did partially. And now he will get another demand letter to clean up the rest of it and if he doesn't, we will sue him. He said that he has used that avenue to force someone to clean up but he doesn't feel right about going to someone and asking them to clean up their property or we'll take it, when Lucky's looks so bad and it is right on highway 114. So we will help the people, if they are willing and if they aren't, then we will go after them the legal route too. Jim Gilliland said that he agrees with that. Juanita Baker said that she feels that when we go ask these people to clean up their property, they will say they are renters. They don't care. Jim Gilliland said that Jason Newton's house is pathetic. Mayor Ferguson asked if he rents or owns. Sally Kerce said that he owns it. It was left to him when his father passed away. She added that everyone that she put on the clean up list is property owners; she said that she didn't list any rental properties. Mayor

Ferguson said that if these people won't go along with us, they will be sued. He said that he has driven around and looked at the properties on the list and none of them are nitpicky. Jim Gilliland asked to see the list. He said that he did say something to Jason Newton about his property. Shirley Davis said that on her road, there is a car sitting in the road and she has had several people complain about it. Mayor Ferguson then asked the council how we should handle the junk cars. Juanita Baker said that if they can't move them, sell them. Mayor Ferguson said that if we take them, we could probably sell them to Luallen's. Luallen's would probably come and get them. Phil Brooks said we need to check and make sure that we can legally take them. Juanita Baker said that we need to send them letters and tell them that they have so long to move them. Phil Brooks said that we could have the guys put a notice on them and tell them that they have a certain amount of time to move them. He added that he thinks that we should stay friendly with people. Mayor Ferguson said that we have the resources to help people and we have the county government that is willing to take this stuff at the dump for no cost. That would be the most expensive part of it. He said that he has tossed around the idea of asking the sheriff for inmates to come and help with the clean up. Phil Brooks said that would be good. Jim Gilliland said that they have backed off of the work details but we could call them.

Mayor Ferguson said that we have shop drawings and some other stuff from Schmitt to go forward on the work at the sewer pond. Juanita Baker asked if they have started yet. Mayor Ferguson said that they haven't.

Mayor Ferguson said that they have called in a locate for the playground equipment but he isn't sure when they will start.

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting ended at 7:24 p.m.

Mayor

Town Clerk