The Lyerly Town Council met for their agenda planning meeting on Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at Lyerly Town Hall. Those in attendance were:

Jim Ferguson, Mayor

Gwen Fisher

Phil Brooks

Juanita Baker

Shirley Davis

March 5, 2019

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

Mayor Ferguson said that he doesn’t have anything, does the council. Juanita Baker said that she would like to talk about SPLOST. She asked if Mayor Ferguson had decided any plans for the SPLOST funds or are we going to use it as thing happen. Like if we have to purchase something. Mayor Ferguson said that we are using it to build the concession stand in the park. He then asked if she is talking about the current or future SPLOST. Juanita Baker said she is talking about if it passes. Mayor Ferguson said that there is huge misunderstanding about this election. This is not a vote for a new tax. This is a vote to continue the 1¢ SPLOST that we have had for the last six years. We aren’t going to get any additional money. It will be business as usual. If it doesn’t pass, we will lose $60,000 to $80,000 every year. Juanita Baker then asked what the SLPOST has been designated for. Mayor Ferguson said that it is pretty wide open to the point where we can use it for just about anything. He added that there are a handful of things that we can’t use it for. Shirley Baker said that we have almost used up what we have in SPLOST. Mayor Ferguson said that we actually have a good amount in the bank. We have committed to building a concession stand with it. Shirley Davis said that is what she meant. The funds we have are already allocated for this year. Mayor Ferguson said that if the SPLOST doesn’t pass, we won’t have anything next year and we will have to cut back. We may even have to raise property taxes. Juanita Baker asked what Kasia Ferguson, the mayor’s wife, thought. Kasia Ferguson said that she thinks that it would be a good idea to put out a flyer to the citizens of Lyerly, post something on the bulletin board or something in the paper about what the SPLOST is going for. She said that she thinks that is where the misunderstanding is coming from. People are wondering where this money is going. They don’t understand that this money has been coming in as business as usual, like the mayor said. She said that she knows what it is but if she wasn’t the mayor’s wife, she probably wouldn’t. Mayor Ferguson said that it true, He said that he has been reading the sound off and a lot of people that are against it, he gets the feeling that they don’t have the correct understanding of what it is that we are voting on. He added, if they vote yes, nothing will change. Juanita Baker said that there are a lot of people that want that penny I their pocket. Mayor Ferguson said that he understands but if they take that penny back and put it in their pocket, it’s going to come back out in another way. Taxes will go up or something. And what they are missing out on is that the people who don’t own property have to pay that tax too. Shirley Davis said that is what she is for. The people who visit Chattooga County are helping with the expenses of Chattooga County. Jimmy Espy added that Lyerly or Menlo when asked where the SPLOST money is going will tell you a project. But when they ask the commissioner, which is where the lion’s share of the money goes, he can’t tell you how it will be spent. He said that he thinks that is where the people are concerned. He will get 70% of the money and he doesn’t have a list of projects or anything. He said that it is the same way with Trion and Summerville. They can’t say where the money will be spent and they get the next biggest percentage of it and a lot of people are uncomfortable with that. Juanita Baker said that you can understand the people in the county wanting to know what the commissioner is doing with the money. Mayor Ferguson said that he planning for it not to pass. It will be different without. We will be ok but it will defiantly be different. We will have to tighten up some. Kasia Ferguson said that we will have to do some fundraising. Mayor Ferguson said that property taxes will be something we will have to discuss too, if it doesn’t pass.

Kasia Ferguson said that the farmer’s almanac says that till April 20th there will be showers and it will be cool but after the 20th it will be sunny and warm. The 20th is what we had picked for the Easter Egg Hunt so we should be ok. She then asked if all of the churches will be involved like last year. All said yes. Kasia Ferguson said that we will use the same decorations as last year. Mayor Ferguson asked if we will have an Easter Bunny this year. Kasia Ferguson said that she is working on it. Shirley Davis said that Kasia will need to let each church know what to bring. Kasia Ferguson said that we can have a signup sheet or even have a work meeting about it. Shirley Davis said that last year, the Methodist church provided the drinks and the Baptist church brought little debbies and cupcakes and the town provided the hot dogs and chips. Everyone agreed to do the same as last year. Shirley Davis then asked if each church will bring eggs. Kasia Ferguson said that we still have some stuff leftover from other events that we can put in the eggs. Shirley Davis said that she has about 500 at the church that she bought when they went on sale last year. Mayor Ferguson asked if we are going to put cash in a few eggs. Everyone said yes. Kasia Ferguson said that we will also have a golden egg and prizes.

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting ended at 7:18 p.m.

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Mayor Town Clerk