

The Lyerly Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at Lyerly Town Hall. Those in attendance were:

Mayor James Ferguson
Phil Brooks
Juanita Baker
Shirley Davis
Jim Gilliland

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The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ferguson at 7:07pm.

Enclosing Storage Area at Town Hall – Mayor Ferguson said that we only had one bid for enclosing the back of town hall. Juanita Baker asked who it was. Mayor Ferguson said that it was Josh Wyatt and he bid \$25,775. Shirley Davis asked if he is kidding. Mayor Ferguson said no. Shirley Davis then asked what is going to be back there. Juanita Baker asked what it would be enclosed with. Mayor Ferguson said that it would be metal walls, insulation, a roll up door, a door into the existing shop and a concrete pad. Shirley Davis said that is too much. Phil Brooks said that he doesn't think that's too far out. Mayor Ferguson asked Jim Gilliland what he thinks. Jim Gilliland said that without looking at it he doesn't know what all is going to be done. He asked how many square feet are we talking about. He then asked what we advertised. Mayor Ferguson said that we advertised for contractors to come by and look at the plans. He then got the plans out and said that it is 58ft x 24ft, 1,392 square feet. He added that we will use the existing ceiling, put up metal walls, put in a roll up door and cut a door into the shop. Jim Gilliland asked where we advertised this at. Mayor Ferguson said that it was in the Summerville News. He said that the options are to take this one bid that we received or we can rebid it. Juanita Baker said that she thinks that we need to bid it out again. Jim Gilliland agreed. Juanita Baker made a motion to rebid enclosing behind town hall. Jim Gilliland seconded. All in favor. Mayor Ferguson said that when we advertise this time, we can advertise in the Rome paper as well, if they want. Jim Gilliland and Juanita Baker both said yes. Mayor Ferguson told Sally Kerce to advertise for bids again and this time run it in the Summerville and Rome papers. Phil Brooks said that he thinks we should keep it local. Jim Gilliland said that we don't have a local paper. Mayor Ferguson said that we tried to keep it local and only got one bid. He then asked if Phil Brooks only wants to run it in the local paper. Phil Brooks said yes. Mayor Ferguson then asked Juanita Baker if she has any thoughts on it. Juanita Baker said that she thinks we should advertise in Rome too. Shirley Davis agreed since we only had one bid. She said that it may not hurt to put it in the LaFayette paper. Mayor Ferguson said that it is a small job and he doesn't know if anyone will want to travel for it. Shirley Davis said that she doesn't consider it small job for that kind of money but she knows the cost of things. Mayor Ferguson said in reality it is tiny. He said that we will give it another shot. Jim Gilliland said that Josh Wyatt isn't local anymore either.

Ragland Building – Mayor Ferguson said that he has a ball park figure on the cost to replace the windows in the Ragland building. Just the windows, he doesn't know about the doors yet. There is a rollup door in the back and double doors on the front. Just the windows will be about \$14,000. He then

asked the council if they want him to go ahead and bid that out. Shirley Davis asked if we are just going to do a little at a time. Mayor Ferguson said that he wants to do the windows and doors first and then we can look into the painting. Shirley Davis said that it wouldn't do any good to paint it without replacing the windows. She then asked if when we redo the front door, are they going to close all that in and just put one door. Mayor Ferguson said that what he was planning on asking the contractor to do is to replace the big glass, brick the front and put double doors like it is now just make it look better. Jim Gilliland asked if we have any idea what we want to do with the building before we start doing this. He asked what we can do with the building. Mayor Ferguson said that it depends on what path we take. If we just put it up for general lease by anyone, we have to take highest offer no matter what they want to do with it. So it could be something that we really don't want in there. Or we can get the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) going, turn the building over to them and they can do whatever they want and they are not bound to take the highest offer. Jim Gilliland said that we wouldn't have any say on it, right? Mayor Ferguson said that the council would give up there say to the DDA. Shirley Davis said that we haven't developed a DDA yet. Mayor Ferguson said no, but we can. Every municipality in the state has a DDA by default. All you have to do is active it. Shirley Davis asked who would be on it. Mayor Ferguson said that we would have to make a list and decide. Shirley Davis said that we went through that last year but we never did do anything. Mayor Ferguson said no, we didn't. Juanita Baker said that we did talk about it before. Mayor Ferguson said that we have talked about it several times. Shirley Davis made a motion to go ahead and put the windows in. Jim Gilliland said that if we put the windows in, then he wouldn't be in favor of a DDA coming in at all because we will have already invested money into the building. He said that he's sure it would be more enticing to a DDA. Mayor Ferguson explained that the DDA would be our DDA made of people who own or have property in Lyerly. Shirley Davis said that we wouldn't have any say about what happens. Mayor Ferguson said that the members of the DDA are actually chosen by him but he wouldn't appoint anyone without talking to council first. Juanita Baker said that if we are going to go ahead and put the windows in, then we should go ahead with the doors too. Shirley Davis said that we need to make it more presentable. Mayor Ferguson said that we need to make it more presentable for if some point in the future we are looking for a partner business to come in there. Looking like it does now would be a hard sale. Jim Gilliland said that what concerns him is if someone wants to come in, he doesn't want the town to have to go back in and remodel or change stuff. Mayor Ferguson said that if someone did want to come in, it would be a negotiation on who pays for what. We may find someone that says the outside looks great and they will remodel the inside. Shirley Davis said that the way it looks now, it is an eye sore. Mayor Ferguson said yes, and we can cure the eye sore part and then move forward. He added that this isn't something we can accomplish in 12 months. We can cure the eye sore part this year but the rest is going to take a little time. No matter which way we go, this is the first step. Shirley Davis said that if we put the windows in, the next step is painting it, right? Mayor Ferguson said yes. Phil Brooks seconded Shirley Davis' motion. All in favor. Jim Gilliland said that needs to be advertised. Mayor Ferguson said that it will be. The council just approved bidding it out. We will put that in the paper next week and we will have bids at the May meeting. Phil Brooks said that we need to move on things because everything is going to go up.

Easter – Mayor Ferguson said that we need to pick a date for Easter in the park. Juanita Baker said that the Baptist church doesn't have a preacher so they have decided to do their own thing for Easter. Mayor Ferguson said that will be on Easter Sunday, right? Juanita Baker said that it will be Saturday and Sunday. She said that she knows that her church has always helped at the park but they have voted not

to do it this year. Shirley Davis said that Pentecostal Power Ministries always does their own too. She thinks that we should just not have Easter this year. Mayor Ferguson said we could do it the weekend before Easter. Mayor Ferguson asked if we do it on a different day than the church, would they still not want to do it. Juanita Baker said that she doesn't think so. Phil Brooks said that we should have it the week before Easter. Shirley Davis said that if we do have it, we don't need to do all the stuff that we usually do. Mayor Ferguson said that we could do April 9th or 10th. Juanita Baker said the 9th. Shirley Davis asked when River Fest is. Mayor Ferguson said it's on the 30th. Shirley Davis said that if we are going to do it, we should just have the Easter egg hunt and not have the hot dogs and stuff. Mayor Ferguson said that he thinks we should do everything that we normally do. Mayor Ferguson asked if during River Fest if Destiny Cabe would run the concession stand. Sally Kerce said that Cindy at the Chamber had told her that a non profit was going to use it. Mayor Ferguson said that she didn't mention that at their meeting. Sally Kerce said that she would ask Cindy about it. Shirley Davis said that if we run the concession stand, then the profits could go to the recreation department.

Mayor Ferguson asked if any of the council has anything else. Juanita Baker asked if the mayor has heard anything else about expanding the city limits. Mayor Ferguson said that he hasn't. Shirley Davis said that if the churches aren't going to help with the Easter egg hunt, the town will have to get the eggs. Mayor Ferguson said that is fine. Juanita Baker said that we can ask the Methodist Church if they would like to help.

Andy McGuire – Mayor Ferguson turned it over to Andy McGuire. Andy McGuire said that he would like to introduce his colleague CJ Pucko, he is the expert on what they are planning to do. CJ Pucko said that in the Lucky's building down the street, they are planning to put in a crematorium. Juanita Baker said no. Shirley Davis said that it would be better than what we've got. Phil Brooks said that there are a lot of questions to be asked about a crematorium. Andy McGuire said that is why CJ Pucko is here. CJ Pucko said that he can also put Nathan with US Cremations on speaker phone and he can answer any technical questions. Mayor Ferguson said that we need to hear him out. He asked if they have already purchased the building. Andy McGuire said that he is leasing to own the building from Tony Patel. He also owns a funeral home in Rome. He is from here and is planning to build a house on Josh Ward Road and lives off of highway 100 right now but that property is for sale. This is something that he has planned on doing for a while, just looking for a location and Tony has given him a pretty good deal on the building. Jim Gilliland asked if he has actually looked at the building. Shirley Davis asked if they would clean up all of the tires and stuff. Andy McGuire said that it will look really nice. It won't be a grocery store or restaurant but it will look really nice. Juanita Baker said that it's not a funeral home either. Andy McGuire said that he is not in competition with the local funeral homes. Juanita Baker said that she says no. She said that she doesn't think we need that in the middle of town. Mayor Ferguson said to hear him out. Shirley Davis said that it's better than what we've got. CJ Pucko gave everyone a handout with information. He said that basically there is an EPA third party that comes in and polices crematories and as the permissible emissions that come from a crematory. The company is called US Cremations and they are out of Florida and they have one of the best units on the market. Basically that BBQ joint across the road put off way more emissions than you'll ever see from the crematory. You'll see heat vapor coming from the stack but no smell and no odor and no emissions from it. Phil Brooks asked if that is a guarantee that there will be no smell. CJ Pucko said yes. Mayor Ferguson asked how high the stack would be. CJ Pucko said that it depends on the pitch of the roof. He said that he can also put bricks and

make it look like a chimney and hide the stack. Most places will make it look like a chimney and be very decorative. Andy McGuire said that it will be governed like a funeral home. CJ Pucko said that there are two licenses in the state of Georgia. Every crematory is licensed separate as a funeral home so you'll have to have a licensed crematory, you'll have to have a refrigeration for the cooling system, a lift that places the deceased into the cremation unit and every year have maintenance on the crematory and it has to be submitted to the inspector that comes twice a year. After that happened with Tri State Crematory, cremations were tightened down strictly in Georgia. He said that what that man did cost more than fixing a \$30 part. The machine will have to be maintained. He said that he can't guarantee that there will never be smoke. Phil Brooks said that smoke is not a problem. Shirley Davis said that the smell is what they are worried about. CJ Pucko said that basically the way the cremation work is that optimum temperature is between 1,425 to 1,800 degrees. Most crematories run about 1,575 to 1,600 degrees. Before you turn the burner on, the unit has to get to that temperature because when the cremation starts the emissions in the back of the chamber is mixing oxygen and the pollutants inside the chamber. There are baffles underneath it and everything is timed to make sure that the only thing going out the stack is heat emissions. He said that he has opened other crematories and funeral homes. His had a funeral home that is at the edge of the property and not even 15ft from it is a dialysis center and had neighbors 10ft from the property line. There is a grocery store next door, restaurants and a child daycare center across the street and in 8 years never had the first complaint. They cremated about 900 people per year. Mayor Ferguson asked where that was. CJ Pucko said in Covington, Georgia. This crematory here will only be servicing licensed funeral homes and it will mainly be Andy McGuire's funeral home. Andy McGuire said that they maybe have 100 per year. He said that they have talked about maybe in the future going with a low end funeral home but at this time, he is not in competition with the other funeral homes. He has his own funeral home. This is just something that he has to outsource and where he's at, they haven't met with the board. It's been several months and they haven't heard from them but they could be zoned there. He wants a different location than his funeral home. Jim Gilliland asked where his funeral home is. Andy McGuire said West Rome. Shirley Davis asked if the council has to make a decision tonight. CJ Pucko said that he can give everyone the phone number to the cremation company and they can speak with Nathan, he is one of the technicians there and he can answer any questions they may have. Shirley Davis asked if the building will look like a regular building and not a crematory. Mayor Ferguson also asked what they have in mind for the outside of the building. Andy McGuire said that everything that is there will be cleaned up. They will have a portico where they have their cars. The garage door that is on the front has to stay until they get the equipment in but once it is that will all change. You won't see them going in the front of the building with bodies. We will do that in the back. The crematory will be on the far side in the back, where the cooler system used to be in Lucky's. The rest will be just storage and office areas until they decide if they are going to do something in the future. If a family wants to view this, there will be a place for them to come in and view the body and also be there during the cremation. They have that option. It will be a viewing room with like 30 seats for people to do that if they want. Jim Gilliland asked to make sure that they have looked at the back of that building. They said that they have and there is a lot of stuff in there but Tony said that he would make it nice and make it right. Shirley Davis asked if Tony is doing it or they are. Andy McGuire said that they are. Tony has him a good lease on it. Mayor Ferguson asked if Tony is involved in any way. Andy McGuire said no, he is just leasing him the building. Mayor Ferguson asked for how long. Andy McGuire said that it is lease to own. They haven't gotten into that contract yet. They need to make sure that this can take place before he does that. Shirley Davis said that we need to know that Tony

doesn't have any part in it other than the leasing of the building. Andy McGuire said yes ma'am. Shirley Davis said that we have already dealt with that problem. Jim Gilliland said that they also need to know the length of the lease. Phil Brooks asked what will be their base load, per month. Andy McGuire said that is hard to determine. He said that last month he had ten cremations and only three in January. Phil Brooks said that he understands that. Shirley Davis said that if you put it in here some of the local people may want to use it. Andy McGuire said that he would like to serve the funeral homes here because they have to outsource. That is his main goal, if they want to use them, they can. Mayor Ferguson said so it may end up being significantly more. Andy McGuire said that if they want to use him, he wouldn't turn them away. Jim Gilliland said that there is a lot of growing business in cremation right now. Andy McGuire said that statically, cremation by 2035, the national average will be 90%. The smaller communities may be a little different. That is what the national average is saying right now. Shirley Davis said that it will get to where there is no place to bury people. Andy McGuire said that there is still a lot of room but this is cost efficient. He said that he wants to serve anyone. Mayor Ferguson asked what the timeline is like. Andy McGuire said that right now he's about eight months out just to get the crematory itself. The process before that is working on the building before the crematory arrives. Jim Gilliland asked if he'll be in business with the crematories. CJ Pucko said that he will have a crematory license. Andy's plan is to serve only licensed funeral homes. Technically, if people want to go directly to the crematory, they can but he will not be set up for that. He will be set up to deal directly with funeral homes. Everything will be discrete but the building will be a significant change. Shirley Davis asked if CJ Pucko is a wholesaler. Jim Gilliland asked if he works for the entity they have the paperwork on. CJ Pucko said that he is totally neutral. He said that he actually has used a company called Matthew's cremations. He has had pet and human crematories and owner that he went with always wanted to go with Matthew's but this company has a better product with less emissions. They are way below the EPA standards for cremation. Jim Gilliland said that he is trying to figure out Andy and CJ's relationship. Is CJ Pucko an advisor? CJ Pucko said that he is just a third party. Andy McGuire will own it. CJ Pucko said that he has been dealing with cremation for 25 years and has installed eight crematories himself. Andy had just asked him to come up here and help. They have been friends for a while. Shirley Davis said that they just want to make sure who is the person that is going to be responsible if anything happens. Andy McGuire said that will be him. Phil Brooks asked if a catastrophe happens, like an overheat, what would be the effect to the people in the immediate surrounding area. CJ Pucko said that everything should be contained in the crematory itself. The problem is if it gets up to 2,800 to 3,200, that is when the wiring and stuff can melt. As long as they don't pour water down that stack....Phil Brooks said that they would have to vent it somewhere. CJ Pucko said that the crematory that they are getting probably has about \$50,000 worth of extra features on it. It will have a computer program where if something happens, they can take control of the cremation in Florida and get the crematory back in order. If an air censor isn't right, they know it in Florida before they do here. Jim Gilliland asked what kind of requirements..... Phil Brooks asked Jim Gilliland to wait just a second, he wasn't finished. Phil Brooks then asked if a catastrophe happens, they will have to vent it and will it be well in excess..... CJ Pucko said that worst case scenario, if you have an obese person of 600lbs, you have to cremate the totally different. They have to be placed in the cremation chamber backwards. Not being disrespectful but obese people have a lot of fat and that could cause a grease fire. You have to start slow and not be in a rush. He added that he has only seen one cremation get out of hand up to 3,200 degrees and he had the cremation people on the phone and they had to let the cremation die down and once it died down, everything is fine. They said do not spray water down the stack and that is the first thing that a fire department would do and it

would start a grease fire. Then you would have something out of hand that you couldn't control. Having someone knowledgeable.... Andy has had his license for 25 years and he is a certified crematory operator. All of the cremationist at the crematory will be certified through that company. Andy could look on his phone and see what is going on at the crematory. Phil Brooks said that viewing it is not what he is questioning, it's what would happen. CJ Pucko said that as long as they don't spray anything down the stack, it will be self contained. Phil Brooks asked if the people on the back street behind it will smell burnt flesh. CJ Pucko said worst case scenario, if it went catastrophic, there would be smoke and there would be odor. Phil Brooks said that is what he wanted to know. CJ Pucko said that like he said before, he had restaurants, a dialysis center and a neighborhood beside him and in eight years he never had the first complaint. As long as you are knowledgeable..... The machine is rated for 800lbs; don't put more than 600lbs in it. Andy McGuire said that the crematory that he is going to purchase is rated heavier. CJ Pucko said that he doesn't recommend cremating anyone over 600lbs. Andy McGuire added that they don't. CJ Pucko said that there are crematories in industrial parks and you would use them as a third party in that case. Jim Gilliland asked what kind of fire department does the state of Georgia or whoever regulates it, require. He said that he is asking if you have to have a fire department on duty all the time for an accident or does it have to be rated a certain rate. CJ Pucko said that in a crematory you will have settings for fire extinguishers. Andy McGuire said that he doesn't know how it works here but every year, the fire department comes and does an inspection. They know where everything is. They know where the chemicals are stored, etc. They have their own protocol. He doesn't know about here. CJ Pucko said that each area has a different fire extinguisher rated for that area. He said that he has cremated thousands of people and he has had one get out of hand. He wasn't there and someone did something that they weren't supposed to but he got there to maintain it to watch and make sure nothing happened. As long as you don't open that door and add fresh oxygen to the problem and just let it die down, it's ok. Andy McGuire said that you don't have untrained people running the crematory. He said that it wouldn't be feasible to have someone part time. These are professional people who know what they are doing. Phil Brooks asked if you have an amount that you do at a time. CJ Pucko said that this crematory will only do four people per day. You don't want to do too many. Phil Brooks said that if you have six and need to get them done..... Andy McGuire said that you don't. That would run the risk of overheating. If you need more done, you would add a second crematory. CJ Pucko said that one thing he would do is if the stack is too high, he would recommend like a fireplace looking setting. Phil Brooks said that is a god idea. Shirley Davis said make it not look like a crematory. CJ Pucko said that Andy won't be advertising it as a crematory; it will just look like a business. It will be associated with his funeral home so anything that happens with the crematory will have a reflection on his other business. He wants to make sure everything is the highest standards and everything is perfect for the community as well. Andy McGuire said because he lives here. Mayor Ferguson asked Andy when he was looking to have a decision from the council. Andy McGuire said that when he has their decision, he can get started on the process of purchasing the crematory and get started on the building. Shirley Davis said that she would like to make a suggestion if the council passes this. Since there is a lady that lives right behind the building, it would be nice if they would put up some kind of fence where she doesn't have to watch everything that is going on. Andy McGuire said that he did that at his funeral home. He has an elderly community right behind it so he has a fence. CJ Pucko asked if there is a regulation of how far it would have to be from the road. Mayor Ferguson said 15ft. CJ Pucko said that he doesn't know if there is 15ft back there. Jim Gilliland said that is an ally anyway. Mayor Ferguson said that it isn't a street. He said that if they need to put up a fence, we could probably work something out where they could do it on the

opposite side of the ally. CJ Pucko said that their goal is for people to not see what they are doing. For it to be private and a nice looking building. Shirley Davis asked if they care if the people in the community know what it is. Andy McGuire said that isn't what CJ meant. Shirley Davis asked if they care if they go home and ask their neighbors how they feel about a crematory in Lyerly. She said that she wants her neighbors to have a say so before she votes to approve it. Andy McGuire said that he thinks what CJ means by that is that they aren't going to hide anything. They just don't want people seeing what is going on. Phil Brooks said like the day to day stuff. CJ Pucko said that if someone is curious and wants to see the crematory and nothing is going on, they could give a tour. There is nothing to hide. Jim Gilliland made a motion to table this until the next meeting so everyone has an opportunity to make a decision. Juanita Baker seconded. All in favor. Mayor Ferguson said that they appreciate them and thanked them for coming.

Mayor Ferguson opened the floor to the public at 7:50.

He asked a gentleman if he was here for something. He isn't a familiar face. He said yes he is kind of new to the area but he will be coming. He said that his name is Steven Hall and he lives on Georgia Avenue. He said that he just wanted to let everyone know that all of the new asphalt that we just had put down is now growing grass. He said there is grass growing up through the asphalt. Shirley Davis asked who did the paving. Mayor Ferguson said Delbert Patty did. He said that we'll see if he can come back out. Sally Kerce said that he is supposed to be coming back to fix a driveway. Mayor Ferguson told Michael Cabe not to kill it so he can ask Delbert about it. Jim Gilliland said that if they don't put weed killer down, the asphalt is just like fertilizer to grass. Michael Cabe said that he has noticed that the edges of the track need to be sprayed due to the grass coming into it. Steven Hall said that you just don't expect asphalt to grow grass. Mayor Ferguson told him that we will take care of it. He then asked if there is anything else that they can do for him. Steven Hall said not at the moment. Phil Brooks said that he was glad he came to the meeting. Mayor Ferguson said that it was nice to meet him. Mayor Ferguson and the council then introduced themselves.

Phil Brooks made the motion to adjourn. Juanita Baker seconded. All in favor.
Meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Mayor

Town Clerk