

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

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

January 7, 2020

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

Juanita Baker said that there isn't a lot on the agenda tonight but could the council review some of the things that we passed in 2019. Jim Gilliland said that before we do that, maybe he needs to be sworn in first.

Mayor Ferguson asked for Jim Gilliland to raise his right hand and read the statement that he handed him aloud. "I do solemnly swear that I will well and truly perform the duties of Council Member of the Town of Lyerly and that I will support and defend the charter thereof as well as the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and of the United States of America." Mayor Ferguson said that he is now sworn in and for him to please sign the statement that he read. Mayor Ferguson and all of the council welcomed Jim Gilliland.

Mayor Ferguson said that this is the first work session of the year. Everyone should have minutes in front of them. He said that we are going to try to do a few things different as far as the meeting this year. Michael Cabe is going to start attending the meetings. He said that there are a lot of things that come up and we have questions and it will be nice to have him here to tell us about things. Juanita Baker asked about the fire chief. She said that he came before. Mayor Ferguson said that the fire chief is also going to start attending, if not every one, at least once per quarter. If Ron Stephens doesn't come, then Kenneth Thompson will. He added that the council will receive financial statements at every work session to review. Juanita Baker asked if we really need to have two sessions per month. Mayor Ferguson said that we don't have to every single month but a lot of times we bring something up at the work session and it gives everyone a week to think on it before the vote. For instance, the minutes; if we don't have a work session, you will get the minutes and have to approve them the same night. The same thing for financial statements, it gives you a week to look over the numbers that can be confusing and you can come back with any questions. He added that he thinks that the work session does serve a purpose but maybe we don't need it every month.

Juanita Baker asked for Mayor Ferguson to do a quick review of some of the things that we did last year. Mayor Ferguson started to think. Phil Brooks said that we built the new parking lot. Mayor Ferguson added that we put the fence up, built the new concession stand, and had a great 4th of July and Down Home Day. We had a great turnout and we did well financially. Juanita Baker said that we got the grant/loan for the sewer ponds, or was that the year before. Mayor Ferguson said that was in 2018 but it has just taken this long. He added that they are finally advertising for contractors to bid on the work to be done. The ad will go into the paper this month and run until February 3rd and LADD will also publish it in some trade journals and job sites that they use. Jim Gilliland asked what this is for. Mayor Ferguson

said that we received a grant in 2018 to upgrade all of the pumps in the sewer system because they have all reached the end of their useful lives. They are all 20 years or older. We got a grant for \$278,079 and we borrowed \$130,000. Jim Gilliland asked if it was a federal grant. Mayor Ferguson said that the grant came from ARC and the loan came from GEFA. We will replace all of the pumps in the sewer system and fix the liner around the sewer ponds, so the guys can work without slipping and falling into the ponds. We will also be building a pole barn to store some of our equipment so it isn't out in the weather. Shirley Davis said that if we hadn't done this, we would have been in trouble down the road. Juanita Baker said that we were almost already in trouble. Mayor Ferguson said that we have already had aerator pumps quitting occasionally and the housing on lower units at the spray field pumps were just about rusted away. If the spray field pumps had failed, we would have been in big trouble. Juanita Baker said that would have shut us down. Mayor Ferguson said that if we can't spray anything out, then we can't take anything in and that means that no one could flush their toilets. Jim Gilliland said that we would have had a big expense getting someone out of Chattanooga to come down here to work on that.

Juanita Baker added that we got a new tractor last year. Mayor Ferguson said that we did replace the tractor and the last old truck. We should have very few mechanical expenses over the next few years, hopefully. Phil Brooks asked if we had replaced the big truck yet. He said that he saw it being towed away. Mayor Ferguson said that we are still going to replace it. It is a 2018 and it has already been on a tow truck twice. Jim Gilliland asked where we take it for repairs. Mayor Ferguson said that we take it to the Ford dealership in Rome. Jim Gilliland then asked what is wrong with the truck. Mayor Ferguson said that he thinks that it is the way it is set up with that work body on it. There isn't enough weight in the front and it eats front tires. We are on our third or fourth set of front tires. The latest thing was that diesel fuel just started pouring out of it and we couldn't drive it. Jim Gilliland asked if it is still under warranty. Mayor Ferguson said that it is. He added that the truck has turned out to be too big for what we need and also, the diesels now require the stuff that you have to add for the exhaust system and it is very expensive. So we are going to get away from the diesel and get something smaller. We are going to get one with the prep package for a snow plow on the front. It will counteract the weight of putting the work body on the back and the cost to add that is only a couple hundred dollars. We should be able to sell the one that we have for the cost of the new one. It will be shorter, a gas burner and have a smaller utility bed. Juanita Baker thanked the mayor. She said that she just needed him to jog her memory.

Mayor Ferguson said that Jan Kilgo was here to talk about the drainage at her house. Mayor Ferguson jokingly told Jan that we had decided to buy here a canoe. Jan said that she was hoping he was going to say they were buying her a new house. All jokes aside, Jim Gilliland asked Jan where the problem is. Jan said that it is in the front. She said that the other day that the water was up over the bottom step. Juanita Baker said that when they put in the sewer, she knew it would cause problems. Jan said that water is standing under her house. Shirley Davis asked if there is anywhere for the water to go past her house. Jan said that it is draining. There is just too much water running across her neighbor's yard and running into hers and not going into the ditch. She added that when they built the lots up above her for the storage buildings and the tiny houses is when her problems began. Mayor Ferguson said that he would get with Michael and see if there is something that we can do. If not, he said that he will talk with Trudy Hartline, who owns the tiny houses.

Jim Gilliland said that he has a lot of questions about some past stuff that has gone on and some future stuff that is coming up. He said that the clerk could probably answer most of his questions. He said that he would like to get with someone and go look at everything that the town owns so he will

know what we are talking about when we talk about it. Mayor Ferguson said that sounds good. He said that Michael will take him around. Shirley Davis said that she meant to ask what the wagon out front is for. Mayor Ferguson said that the guys built that and it will take the place of the golf cart that we had to rent last year for the events. Jim Gilliland asked if it was made out of surplus. Mayor Ferguson said that we had an extra lawnmower trailer that was too small for the zero turn lawnmower so they used it. Mayor Ferguson then asked Jim Gilliland what other questions that he had. Jim Gilliland said that he would get with everyone. He said that it has been a while since he has done anything like this. He added that Clerk Sally Kerce has already got him set up for school in March. He then asked if the city provides transportation. Mayor Ferguson said that we will pay for his gas, room and food. He then asked about security. He said that he thinks that we could get a grant. He said that he has a friend that is a grant writer and she said that she would write any grants that we need. Mayor Ferguson said that if Jim Gilliland finds one that he thinks that we can get, he'll be more than welcome to look into it. Mayor Ferguson said that he had talked to the Sheriff about us using off duty deputies and their cars. He even offered to pay for the use of their cars. The Sheriff finally got back with him and said he would prefer them to use our security car. We have fixed almost everything that is wrong with the security car so he is going to get back with the Sheriff about using deputies. Jan Kilgo asked if a neighborhood watch would have any more pull than a security guard when they call the law. Mayor Ferguson said that a call to 911 is a call to 911. Jan Kilgo said that she knows of places where crime has decreased when they established a neighborhood watch. Mayor Ferguson said that if someone wants to organize that, it would be great but we just can't run it out of here.

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting ended at 7:38 p.m.

Mayor

Town Clerk