CITY OF OGLETHORPE

OGLETHORPE CITY HALL

115 CHATHAM STREET

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

JULY 7, 2022 – 6:00PM

**Call to order:** 6:00PM

Council in Attendance: CM Daniels, Pro-tem Cross, Mayor Hill, CM Harrison, CM Coogle, and CM Mahone

Dept Heads in Attendance: City Clerk Melissa Jones, Fire Chief Owen Childs, Officer Josh Harris, Attorney Jon Coogle

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

**Invocation:** Mayor Hill

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion made to approve agenda with addition of Fire Chief Childs overview made by CM Coogle, 2nd by CM Cross, AIF

**Approval of Minutes** from June 2, 2022 Regular Council Session and June 30, 2022 Work Session motion made by CM Harrison, 2nd by CM Daniels, AIF

Recognitions of Guest(s): Chief Eric Finch, Terrel Jacobs, Steven & Debra Harris

**New Business:**

1) Chief Eric Finch of Montezuma Police Dept – presentation handed out to council in pamphlet he created – Stated that on May 27, 2022 that the Oglethorpe Council contacted him to be interim Chief of Police for Oglethorpe. They asked for a 30day agreement, but nothing happened. He asked council about hiring and what we paid. He asked for email addresses for all council members. He wants to know who has the keys to the evidence room. He plans to overtake the evidence room within the next month. For hiring Oglethorpe could use the Police Academy and get a 2year contract from them. April – May 20th they did not charge the City of Oglethorpe for services. Montezuma has a $1.2 million budget for @ 20 people. Chief Finch is the reason we have a 911 call center. See last page to see how consolidation of the departments would work. Oglethorpe could use his certification. CM Harrison asked about the $2K management fee and the $1k administration fee on the invoice the city received from Montezuma. Chief Finch advised that those were fees that would be on the invoice each month regardless if they answered any calls. CM Harrison asked if there was detail for these charges? Chief Finch advised that he and clerk did multiple jobs in regards to this charge. Said that the Oglethorpe was getting more service than what they were being charged for. City Clerk Melissa Jones asked if there were reports/tickets to back up the “answered calls” that were attached to the back of the invoice received from Montezuma? Chief Finch advised that the list of calls was taken from the 911 log. Ms. Jones advised that she had already seen the 911 log, but her question was in regards to auditing – how does she know that a call was actually answered by Montezuma so that if an auditor asked her for proof – she could supply it. Chief Finch – My officers answer and state that they answered a call. Ms. Jones advised of a call on June 10, 2022 at City Hall when she accidentally hit the medical button on the alarm system when coming in that morning. She cancelled the call, but 10-15 minutes later when she went out front to check the overnight dropbox she saw the EMT’s pull up and realized it apparently didn’t cancel the call. She advised the EMT’s that she was fine, that it was an accident. She went back inside, but never saw an officer from Montezuma. Chief Finch stated he had no reason to lie and that the call had been answered. He pointed out his pamphlet and said there’s the data……… Ms. Jones advised that his pamphlet had nothing to do with the invoice that she had received and just wanted to make sure that she could prove to an auditor that the city received the services that it paid for. She also asked about a call on Hwy 26E that the city was being charged for as that is in the county. Chief Finch said he must’ve had a typo that it should have been 26W. Ms. Jones asked what happened to “mutual aid” between departments for a wreck listed on the invoice? There has never been a charge for that in the past. Chief Finch said he would check with his officer in regards to the city hall call. CM Cross asked about any progress made on the agreement with pricing that Montezuma City Manager Mel Fulghom was going to work on. Mr. Fulghom advised that there would need to be a committee from each city to help with that, but it did not look like right now that anyone was ready to move forward with combining. Mayor Hill advised that it would probably be best for now to put any work on a consolidation on the back burner.

2) Terrel Jacobs – White Sheets handed out and conversation in regards to other cities/counties combining. Mr. Jacobs will send Melissa the information on how to start up a police department that will give information to help with our current situation. Yes, there are revenue challenges here, but the Municipal Court is Revenue. Revenue, benefits, liability, and legal issues are all things that the city will have to work through. Chatham Co and Savannah merged their departments…. Politics became and issue and they have now dissolved that union. In whatever agreement you make, you have to have an “out” clause. You need to look into the State of Ga Service Delivery Strategy. If you do this you have to open up one of these and if you change it, you have to open it up and change it. CM Harrison – Would a merger change our county seat? Mr. Jacobs – no, you don’t have to provide a police department to have a city.

3) Steven & Debra Harris – speed bumps on Cuyler (Mr. Harris decided to wait for another time to address council)

4) Appointment of council member to attend Better Home Town meetings – Motion made to appoint CM Mahone to be the liaison between the city and the BHT and attend meetings made by CM Harrison, 2nd by CM Coogle, AIF

**Old Business:**

1) Gym – Fire Chief Owen Childs advised that at this time the gym was not safe for use and should continue to stay closed. Toured the gym with CM Mahone, CM Daniels, and David Parrott (Macon County Building Inspector). There are issues with handrails, electric panels, water fountains with exposed electrical wires, etc. There is a transformer outside the building barely hanging on over a gas tank. Motion made to have Melissa Jones contact Georgia Power to assess immediately and identify if issue is on City side or Ga Power side and to cut the power if city responsibility made by CM Harrison, 2nd by CM Cross, AIF

2) Fire Chief Childs – gave quick monthly overview for fire dept.

**Other Business:**

1) Motion is made to enter a contract with Ingram and Associates to provide engineering services for the 2022 American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Recovery Funds Grant Award. Ingram and Associates was chosen because they have worked with the city of Oglethorpe for many years and have provided excellent service – made by CM Cross, 2nd by CM Coogle, AIF

**Adjourn:** 7:38PM Motion made by CM Coogle, 2nd by CM Cross, AIF