

City of White Georgia  
City Council Meeting  
May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Present at the council meeting were Mayor Curtis Powell, Councilmembers Stephanie Nichelson, DJ Bennett, Karissa Noland, and Jean Swank, City Clerk Robin Cochran, and City Attorney Debra Golymbieski.

Mayor Powell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and began with the pledge of allegiance. Councilmember Nichelson gave the invocation.

Mayor Powell moved to the approval of the agenda for May 4<sup>th</sup>. Councilmember Nichelson asked to add an item to the agenda under new business item "e" City of White and Bartow Co interconnection. Powell asked if there was a motion to add item "e" City of White/Bartow Co interconnection. Councilmember Nichelson made a motion to add item "e". Councilmember Swank seconded the motion and the motion carried with a 5-0 vote. Powell stated he would like to make a motion to revise the word "approval" to Day of Prayer Proclamation item "a" under new business. Councilmember Swank approved the change to item "a" and Councilmember Nichelson seconded the motion. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

Mayor Powell moved to the approval of the minutes from April 6<sup>th</sup>. Councilmember Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Councilmember Nichelson. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

Mayor moved on to the Public Hearing portion of the meeting concerning the rezoning of property located at 3173 Hwy 411. Powell explained that each side (for and against the rezoning) had 10 minutes cumulative to speak. Powell started with the applicant, Bradley Barnett.

\* Developer Bradley Barnette stated his company was working on a property that was approved by mayor and council two years ago. Barnett said they discovered they needed more property and the land owned by Petro Partners was for sale due to the citizen pushback. He is asking for the rezoning of the Petro property from C to R4. He showed the proposed use for the property stating a double entrance to the subdivision is in the plan, turn lane and appealing landscaping. He also reported the houses on this particular portion of the property would be larger. Barnett stated that access to water would be easier. He said the property will have one and two car garage homes with 1700-1800 sq feet. Barnett stated that the TOYO employees need a place to live to help with the turnover. He stated there is a real need in this area for housing and help will be given with closing/downpayments. Councilmember Nichelson asked if there would still be 2 entrances to the property. Barnett stated yes. He stated the entrance from this

property would give a greater opportunity for landscaping. Councilmember Swank stated that the entrance there would make the property more visible. Barnett stated the prices will be lower than originally planned to address the housing need and find the sweet spot. He stated that the preliminary count is about 177 units. Councilmember Bennett asked if the roadway would be a city street off of Hwy 411. The response was yes; it will be a city street. Powell asked if there was any feedback from GDOT. Michael Brooks stated that they had not coordinated with GDOT and if this goes this way that Bartow Co will be responsible for permitting. Powell continued with a comment about the off center driveways. Brooks stated the right-of-way would be connected to the property and tying the entrance in. Barnett stated for us to connect to the water there was a major culvert that the state will have to rebuild. He continued by stating this is a conceptual plan and needs it to look good. Powell stated the left turn is going to be a huge benefit. Both the mayor and Barnett agreed that more discussions are in the future. Councilmember Bennett asked where the homes would start, and Barnett stated that there would be landscaping first and then they would start just after. City Clerk Robin Cochran informed Barnett his time was up.

\* Citizen, Eddie Billue spoke in favor of the rezoning request and asked the council to please approve. He stated that his employer TOYO put out a survey and received 152 responses from employees that were excited about having housing available in White. He also stated that TOYO is developing programs to help those employees achieve this goal by helping with down payments. Billue stated that residential growth is necessary for our city in order to prosper. He continued by stating that future projects should include affordable housing for seniors. Billue asked the council to use their good judgement in their decision. Toyo is trying to keep their employees and helping with housing will be good for everybody. Councilmember Nicholson asked a question to make sure TOYO is working with both developments. Billue stated yes. Nicholson asked about the shuttle that had been mentioned before transporting employees to TOYO and home after work. Billue stated that the shuttle is still in the works as doing it for 2 or 3 not likely but if the development is 50% TOYO it would be offered.

Powell asked if anyone else wanted to speak during the hearing either for or against the rezoning. Hearing none, he closed that portion of the meeting.

Mayor Powell moved on to Public Comments. No one signed up and the mayor moved on.

Mayor Powell moved on to department reports:

\*Robin Cochran, City Clerk, gave an update on the festival stating everyone had a great time and thanked the staff for their help. She reported items needed by the food pantry. Lastly Cochran stated that you can always find the agenda on the website and front door the week before the meeting.

\*Brad Loyd, Police Chief, gave the department stats for April:

Traffic Stops – 53, Accidents – 5, Agency Assists – 5, Calls for Service – 83, Citizen Contacts – 295, Business Escorts – 140, Arrests -2, Business Checks – 288, Citations – 25 and Warning – 77. He also gave an update on the new police truck that should be ready Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. Councilmember Swank asked about the 5 accidents and where they were. Chief replied 3 of them were Hwy 411 at Stamp Creek.

\*Shawn Chastain, Public Works Director, reported

\*\*There were 2 service line leaks in April all repaired in house.

\*\*Chastain also stated they repaired 1 six inch water line leak

\*\* He reminded everyone that we are under Level 1 Drought restrictions issued by the EPD. Chastain stated times for watering were between 4pm and 10am.

Mayor Powell asked about the burn ban. Chastain said he did not know but the State of GA has a statewide ban that started before May 1 due to the drought.

Mayor Powell moved on to unfinished business:

1. Approval of City of White/Bartow County Sewer IGA. Powell suggested table this item till a date to be determined. City Attorney Debra Golembeski stated that it should be on the June agenda as they were close to an agreement. Powell made a motion to table this item till June and seconded by Councilmember Swank. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

2. Approval of designing a new website with Lara J Designs at \$10,850. Councilmember Nicholson stated she would like to see more quotes and table till June. Mayor Powell said we could put out an RFQ and a motion was in order. Councilmember Nicholson made a motion to table this item till June and put out the RFQ and Councilmember Bennett seconded the motion. Councilmember Swank did not vote but her vote counts toward the majority. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

Mayor Powell moved to new business:

1. Powell moved on to the proclamation for the National Day of Prayer. He stated there would be a service by Wofford's Crossroads Baptist Church on May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm out at the flagpole. Everyone is invited.

2. Approval for the Safe Streets for all Grant. Powell explained that this calls for proposals that would help the city apply for grants to help us develop projects for Federal funding. He stated that the Foresight Group would help us with developing the proposal (recommended by John Sweitzer) and this is an engineering budgeting item. Councilmember Bennett asked if this was a one-time fee to which Powell responded yes. Bennett asked what they would do. Powell stated they could hold a town hall to ask what the citizens want to make the street safe and put the potential projects together. He continued by stating they will also help with budgeting long range projects. Councilmember Swank stated that this will be very helpful to use someone outside the organization with our planning. Powell asked if there was a motion. Councilmember Swank made a motion to approve the Safe Streets for all Grant, and Councilmember Nicholson seconded the motion. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

3. . Approval of the Survey and Environmental Phase I for the 75 Richards Rd property. Mayor Powell stated we got the quotes for the survey and site assessment. Powell stated the survey was \$12,100 and the site assessment was \$2450. Powell stated a motion was in order. Councilmember Nicholson made a motion to approve the Survey and Phase I Site Assessment, and Councilmember Bennett seconded the motion. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

4. Mayor Powell moved on to the revised resolution to join the City of Milton Amicus. He explained it was a case where an individual ran off the roadway and hit a large flower pot owned by the city and died. Powell stated the family sued the City of Milton who was found at fault. Milton appealed to the GA Court of Appeals, and they agreed the City of Milton was at fault. Milton asked other cities to join them and the GA Supreme Court vacated the decision of the GA Court of Appeals, so it was sent back. Powell stated this is just a continuation of the original request. He asked our city attorney to explain further. Golymbieski stated that Powell had done a great job in his explanation of what happened in the case with one small difference: nuisance cases/sovereign immunity. She reported along with Powell the award in the case was \$40 million dollars. Powell stated a motion was in order. Councilmember Swank made a motion to approve the revised Resolution of the Amicus for the City of Milton, and Councilmember Noland seconded the motion. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

5. Mayor Powell moved to the City of White and Bartow County interconnection and recognized Jay Renew, member of Sweitzer Engineering. Renew stated they conducted a preliminary review of the water rates using a temporary Bartow connection. He stated there are two options to look at:

\*Case 1, the sewer agreement with Bartow County goes forward and the existing USDA loans are retired.

\*Case 2, the sewer agreement with Bartow County does not go forward and the USDA loans are not retired.

\*\*With Case 1, Renew stated they recommend increasing the base and volume rates across the board 5-10% with 5% being the minimum (10% would be better considering the amount put into the reserve account) assuming the reduction of the USDA loan is applied to

the Water/Sewer Department. The temporary interconnection costs is estimated at \$322,000, which will be paid with 2020 Splost Funds.

\*Renew suggested a 5% increase on the base rate of 3/4 inches by 5/8 inches meter for a single house right now the base is \$14.19 to \$14.90. He stated the volume charge of \$2.96/1000 gallons with a 5% increase would be \$3.10/1000 gallons. Renew gave an example of a typical household purchasing 5500 gallons of water right now \$28.99 and it would go up to \$30.40 per month. Renew stated this is lower than Bartow which is \$41.46 for the same 5500 gallons.

\*He stated if you increased it 10%, the base rate would be \$15.61, and the volume charge would be \$3.26/1000 gallons. Which for the same 5500 gallons the cost would be \$31.91 which is still lower than Bartow.

\*Councilmember Bennett asked what the average was per household to which Renew stated 5500 gallons. A citizen asked if the sewer bill would be going up and Renew answered no consideration was given to raising sewer pricing as it is already comparable. Councilmember Bennett asked again about the increase to the sewer and Renew replied the sewer will not increase as it is compatible with Bartow.

\*Renew stated again that these prices are still significantly lower than Bartow. Stating again the \$31.91 per month versus \$41.46. He continued by stating this is a water project and any increase will be to the water.

\*\*With Case 2, if the Bartow Sewer deal does not go through then we will still have the USDA loans so that would take a big increase of 40% and would get that monthly bill up to \$40.57 which is close to the Bartow \$41.46 rate for the same. Councilmember Bennett asked if we don't do what? Renew responded that if the sewer agreement fails and we will still have the USDA loan to pay. He stated that the USDA loan is the main difference in the two options. Councilmember Swank explained to Councilmember Bennett that we would still have to take care of the loan. Renew stated the USDA loans are the main difference in the two cases.

Councilmember Bennett continued with questions about the loans and Swank explained the loans were for the sewer system and was separate from the grant funds for the water. Powell further explained that Renew was calculating the rate increases in case the city still needs to pay for the maintenance/operation of the sewer system as well as the 2.5million in loans. Renew stated again we are looking at the connection as a temporary fix.

Citizens were discussing whether the sewer rates from the City of Cartersville would increase. Powell stated that it will not be Cartersville, it will Bartow County. Citizen Eddie Billue asked about losing revenue for the sewer to which Renew states we will not lose one customer. Powell told both citizens that the revenue will stay as the county is only gaining service area where there are currently no customers. Citizen Kim Billue said do we have another lift station. Powell responded we have Toyo lift station and stated that service area will not be effected. Citizen Kim Billue asked if the county has the lift station how are we going to get money out of them. Powell stated once again that we will be collecting from our service area. Citizen Kim Billue continued the discussion and Powell stated again they will still be our sewer customers. He replied that we would be paying Bartow County and not Cartersville. Citizen Kim Billue wanted to know who is treating it. Powell stated Cartersville will be but

through the county. Powell then stated let's move on. The Mayor and Council continued to discuss the information amongst themselves for clarification for those who still had questions.

Councilmember Nichelson made a motion in the interest of cleaner water for the citizens the City of White would like to move forward with the Bartow Co water interconnection on a temporary basis using 2020 Splost funds as proposed by our engineer. Councilmember Swank seconded the motion. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

Councilmember Bennett announced that the city's Facebook page was deleted as it was connected to someone's personal account.

Mayor Powell asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Bennett made a motion to adjourn, and Councilmember Noland seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. The meeting ended at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robin Cochran  
City Clerk

Attest:



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Curtis Powell, Mayor