

CITY OF THOMSON  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
June 13, 2024

6:00PM

Thomson-McDuffie Government Center

Present:

Benji Cranford, Mayor  
Alton Belton, Councilmember  
Keryl Corley, Councilmember  
Elaine Johnson, Councilmember  
John Smalley, Councilmember  
Scott Whittle, Councilmember  
John Waller, City Administrator

Lucretia Ferguson, City Clerk  
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney

Also Present:

Chief Dan Carrier, TPD  
Karen Fioretti, McDuffie Progress  
27 Attendees

At 6:00pm, Mayor Cranford called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order and Councilmember Smalley gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

**CITIZEN INPUT:** Peggy Lovejoy spoke on the honor of having a street or building named after Louis Graziano. Tom Thieman brought before the Council that his previous neighbor, Julie Klare, had moved. She was not allowed to have chickens and felt City Ordinances are not clear as to what exactly “livestock not allowed within the City limits” means. City Attorney Plunkett pointed out that the Georgia State Department of Agriculture defines chickens as livestock. Randall Reeves presented the Council with a map of National Avenue between Johnson Avenue and West Hill Street. He proposed that this be named after Mr. Graziano. Roger Dozier is concerned, as a resident of Whiteoak Street, with the heavy trucks and potholes on Whiteoak. Julie Gerlach wanted the Council to know how helpful Streets & Solid Waste Director Chris Hampton was in removing a fallen tree recently on Mendel Avenue. Its removal helped keep those that walk on the right-of-way out of the street. She also questioned if volunteer groups or possibly high school interns could be utilized to trim back overgrowth that hides street signs and walkways and also spoke on the feral dogs who harbor ticks and diseases.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

The motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Belton to approve the agenda as written. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- a. Council Meeting, May 9, 2024. A motion was made by Councilmember Corley and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.



- b. Called Council Meeting, May 21, 2024. A motion was made by Councilmember Corley and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

**BUSINESS:**

- a. Popular Springs Baptist Church Request: The church had previously asked for use of the parking lot next to the Main Street Elections building for a clothing give away. That event was rained out. They would like to make the same request for July 20<sup>th</sup>, with a Rain Date of July 27<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Belton to approve both dates. A vote of 5-0 was taken in favor.
- b. Springfield Baptist Church Request: Springfield Church requested permission to close MLK Jr., West, and Springfield Streets, around the church from 6:00pm to 9:30pm on June 28<sup>th</sup> in celebration of the end of vacation bible school. A motion to approve the request was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Belton. A 5-0 vote in favor was taken.
- c. Recreation Department Request: TMRD asked to close Railroad Street, from Main to Greenway Streets from 4:00pm to 8:00pm on July 25<sup>th</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup> to host Food Truck events. A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley to approve the closures and was seconded by Councilmember Belton. A vote of 5-0 approved the request.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Council Report: Councilmember Whittle commended the City workers for their removal of debris left from recent storms.

Mayor Report: Mayor Cranford was appreciative of the work done to send out Utility Bills each month by City workers, however the Post Office's slowdown in delivery has caused concern for many customers. He apologized for any inconvenience this has caused.

City Administrator Report: CA Waller informed the Council that City workers have worked the last two Saturdays to clean up inert waste from the recent storms. During the time that we are without a Finance Director Symphona, an accounting and finance company from Dublin, has been hired to help the City. We will have a dedicated Symphona employee who will handle a set of specific tasks for the Finance Department. When bids were opened for the Augusta Road Water Treatment Plant, the lowest bid was higher than the amount of the GEFA loan that covers the project. The two lowest bidders were invited to adjust their submissions and come back to the table for review again. This will hopefully be done before the July Council meeting and be voted on at that time.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Having no other public business, the motion was made at 6:32pm by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Corley to go into Executive Session for the purpose of Personnel discussion. A 5-0 vote passed the motion.

After the discussion, a motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Corley to return to Regular Session at 7:15pm. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.



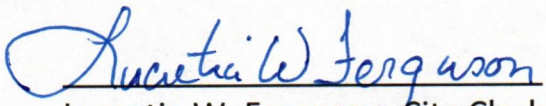
**REGULAR SESSION:**

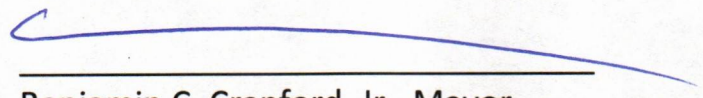
At that time, Councilmember Corley made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, to give raises to two Directors. An affirmative 5-0 vote was recorded.

**ADJOURN:**

The motion to adjourn was tendered by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A vote of 5-0 ended the meeting at 7:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk

  
Benjamin C. Cranford, Jr., Mayor

