



CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH
CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 15, 2024

Council Meeting Room

Regular Session

7:00 PM

7224 GA HIGHWAY 21
PORT WENTWORTH, GA 31407

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Gary Norton called the meeting to order.

2. PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Member Rufus Bright Led the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

3. ROLL CALL - CLERK OF COUNCIL

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Gary Norton	Mayor	Present
Gabrielle Nelson	Mayor Pro Tem	Present
Thomas Barbee	Council Member	Present
ArtLise Alston-Cone	Council Member	Present
Mark Stephens	Council Member	Present
Rufus Bright	Council Member	Present
Shawn Randerwala	Council Member	Present

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilman Thomas Barbee made a motion to approve the agenda with the following changes:

- Combine 12.A and 13.C
- 13.E has been pulled off the agenda by the applicant

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
SECONDER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

5. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS - REGISTERED SPEAKERS

A. Steve Hester

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Rezoning

B. LaRay Benton

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Rezoning

C. Hannah Hester

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Rezoning

D. Erick Estrada

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Rezoning

E. Freddie Lewis Archer

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Rezoning

F. Micheal McNamara

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Rezoning

G. Georgia Benton

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Rezoning

H. Manda Dunigan

Discussed the following topic(s):

- District Map
- Elections Page
- Charter & Ordinance

I. Valerie Williams

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Zoning

J. Karen Hughes

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Zoning

K. Issac Wright

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Information delivery
- Traffic concerns
- Safety Concerns

L. Charles Coover

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Post Office
- City Changes

M. Austin Bailey

Discussed the following topic(s):

- Zoning
- Traffic
- Safety concerns

7. ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS

8. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes - July 18, 2024

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
SECONDER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

9. COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS

City Manager Steve Davis recognized Mayor Pro Tem Gabrielle Nelson for being appointed to the Georgia Municipal Association Legislative Policy Council.

He also gave a presentation and an after-action report for Hurricane Debbie. City Manager Davis thanked Atlantic Waste and EOM for the job that they did through the storm, helping to keep things going. He also recognized the City's Police, Fire, Public Works Department. He stated that they started preparing for the storm by meeting with all of the department's heads, and throughout the storm there was 90 employees working. He also explained that there was an EOC open at the CLIC Center with the Emergency Command. The Public Works Team was out on the streets helping to remove trees that had fallen and clearing roadways. He also thanked Morgan Halloran the Emergency Management Coordinator for keeping all of the financials and documents straight. He also explained that after the hurricane was over the police and fire department took the MRAP (a high-water rescue vehicle) to unincorporated Chatham County and Richmond hill and saved several lives, which included about 99 recuses, handing out sandbags and more.

Mayor Gary Norton also stated that he wanted to personally thank them for not just what they did during the hurricane, but for what they do every day.

Councilman Mark Stephens stated that for the area he believes that the City had one of the best outcomes, and that they did everything, and he thanked them.

Mayor Pro-Tem Nelson stated that she is grateful for the job that they have done and appreciated them for allowing her to help and participate with them. She also explained that watching them work together and seeing their camaraderie, cooking meals together, and more is such a blessing.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

11. CONSENT AGENDA

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Consideration to approve the 2nd Reading of a Zoning Map Amendment Application submitted by Philip R. McCorkle as Agent for Ronald A. Royal, requesting to rezone (+/-)10 of 48.48 acres from R-1 to C-2, to allow for commercial development. PIN # 7-0975-01-024, located in the 1st Council District, at 6510 Georgia Highway 21.

Councilman Thomas Barbee made a motion to approve items 12.A and 13.C combined and it was second by Councilman Rufus Bright.

Mayor Pro-Tem Nelson explained that they have not required the same thing from everybody, but what she asked for was impact fees, development agreement and now this, which will be what is going to be done moving forward. If large developments come, they will provide a benefit to give back to the city and it is not optional. Noone wants to see the warehouses, but we understand that we have to find a place for it and the popcorn affect is what is trying to be remedied.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
SECONDER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

- B. Consideration of the 2nd Reading of an application submitted by Steven M. and Janet N. Hester requesting to rezone 12.27 acres from R-1 to C-2, to allow for commercial development. PIN# 7-0978-05-016, located in the 3rd Council District at 440 Meinhard Road.

Councilman Bright made a motion to table the item for 60 days, and it was second by Councilman Stephens.

Mayor Pro-Tem Nelson stated that she is supportive of the project, but she would like to see a development agreement.

Councilman Stephens stated that he is also in favor of this development, however, there are some things that need to be ironed out with the attorney's that they already know about, and this will allow for all of those details to be ironed out.

City Attorney Scott Robichaux clarified that the motion and second was for 60 days, but explained that the Council meeting that they wanted to bring it back for was October 17th which is 63 days and if that is what they meant? They both said yes.

Councilman Bright explained that besides that this is a good project, but he wanted all the details to be ironed out, so that they can get it right and come back with everything right.

RESULT:	TABLED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
SECONDER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

13. NEW BUSINESS

A. EOM – Agreement for Operations, Maintenance, and Management Services

City Manager Davis explained that this is the first permanent agreement that the City has ironed out with EOM, and they have been operating for the past year on a temporary contract that we hired them on. The increase from their temporary contract is only a 2% difference and this is a 2-year deal. We strongly recommend approval as they have been fantastic partners, they are a very professional organization, they have the wells up and running and the wastewater treatment working beyond capacity.

Councilman Stephens stated that he wanted to personally thank EOM for all of the work that they have done for the City, and since they have come on the City has not had any issues with EPD.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member
SECONDER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

B. Greater Savannah Black Chamber of Commerce Agreement - Tourism Services

City Manager Davis explained that the City has stopped with the previous vendor on the DMO services for the Hotel Motel and Tax and have been looking for some diversification with our services where we have only had one and are looking to go to two. The first one which is being presented is the Greater Savannah Black Chamber of Commerce as they service the entire region. They will only be receiving a portion of the DMO Funds and will be hiring a person specifically for the City.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
SECONDER:	ArtLise Alston-Cone, Council Member
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala
NAYES:	Mark Stephens

C. Royal Development Agreement

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
SECONDER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

D. Consideration of a Special Use Permit Application submitted by Phillip R. McCorkle as Agent for Ronald A. Royal, requesting to allow warehousing on an industrial-zoned property. PIN # 7-0975-01-024, located in the 1st Council District, at 6510 GA Highway 21, zoned I-1.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
SECONDER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
AYES:	Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

E. Consideration of a Special Use Permit Application submitted by Ferrellgas as Agent for Justin and Jennifer Redmond, requesting to allow warehousing on an industrial-zoned property. PIN # 7-00009-02-001, located in the 4th Council District, at 3 Birkenhead Road, zoned I-1. Item removed from agenda by applicant.

14. RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES/PROCLAMATIONS

A. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance- 1st Reading

City Manager Davis explained that even though a full rewrite was done, there are a few things that need to be changed. He also explained what those changes were, and that he believed that these tweaks are necessary.

Councilman Stephens asked if the fire department was capable of handling the new height restrictions being proposed, and Mr. Davis said yes.

B. Amendments to the Parking Ordinance- 1st Reading

City Manager Davis stated that they are finding that several roads that needed to be addressed as there were cul-de-sac issues, one-sided boulevard, the removal of tractor trailers from residential areas, and some minor edits with things such as container restrictions.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Litigation

B. Personnel

C. Real Estate

Before going into executive session Councilman Randerwala made a motion to have City Manager Steve Davis ride the mechanical bull at the City's first ever La Fiesta Hispanic Celebration, and it was second by Councilman Stephens. Approved Unanimous.

Mayor Pro-Tem Nelson made a motion to go into to executive session, and it was second by Councilman Stephens. Approved Unanimous.

Councilman Randerwala made a motion to reconvene regular session, and it was second by Mayor Pro-Tem Nelson. Approved Unanimous.

Mayor Norton explained that the MRAP that the City used during the hurricane was given to the City by SAPS.

Councilman Randerwala made a motion to approve the Sikes Change Order, and it was second by Councilman Stephens. Approved Unanimous.

Councilman Stephens made a motion approve a moratorium on special use permits for 30 days, and it was second by Councilwoman Cone. Approved Unanimous.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
SECONDER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member

AYES:

Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Gabrielle Nelson, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

16. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Pro-Tem Nelson made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Councilwoman Alston-Cone. Approved Unanimous.

Mayor Gary Norton

The foregoing minutes are true and correct and approved by me on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

ATTEST:

Zahnay Smoak, Clerk of Council