7:00 – PM – CALL MEETING TO ORDER ROLL CALL

- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- READING OF MINUTES/APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- COMMENTS/PUBLIC ISSUES

* FINANCIAL REPORT (Hand out)

**1.  COUNCIL AGENDA /ISSUES/WORK UPDATES:**

**GARDEN** - Brenda Sells - Updates? Solar lights installed, working okay?

**PARK** - Monte Powell - Updates?

**COMMUNITY CENTER** - Repair of the porch ceiling?

**ROADS AND APPEARANCE** - Update? Notified county and 911 that we’re leaving the downed trees on Salem at the moment to deter unwanted activity on the road

**2. OLD BUSINESS:**

* Any update on addressing the election process? Have discussed with Shea her handling if needed
* Received email Friday, July 26th from CGI Digital informing us that they won’t be able to provide the banners for us as we had hoped. This was due to them not being able to secure enough sponsorships from the local businesses to fund the project. They have provided us free of charge the artwork that they had designed for us to use if we’d like to use it. I feel at the moment we need to table getting new banners until we can hopefully get our sewer problem resolved. We can then look at whether we want to try using the designs provided or a standard design as we had in the past.
* Brenda is still trying to get someone to get the electricity done for the new storage building and the gift shop. I ordered & received the tents and picnic table (for use at tree lighting) and have put them in the new storage building. I’ve also put a combination lock on the door to allow access for those needing access that don’t have a key. We can change the combination in the future if we determine there is a need.
* I’m still working on getting someone to help with our ‘little library’ .. Get one, Leave one. It’s been so hot lately I haven’t been pushing the issue. Will continue to reach out.
* We finally received the certified mail envelope back that had been sent to Mr. Duerfeldt on July 29, 2024. I sent a text message to him inquiring if he wished to pick it up from city hall or us to send via certified mail. I didn’t get a response so I sent another text to him Sunday, August 18th again inquiring if he wished to pick up the mail or for me to send certified mail. I informed him that I intend to send again via certified mail Tuesday, August 20th if I don’t get a reply. I’ve sent the envelope again via certified mail.
* Mobley successfully cleaned out our water tank on June 25th and everything ran smoothly since we opted to hook up with Lyons during this process as it ran a little longer than was originally planned. We should be good as we only need to have cleaned every 3 years. We can thank Rusty Wright for assisting with flushing the line beforehand, etc.

**3. NEW BUSINESS:**

* We can thank Brenda Sells for working with Sikes in getting our parking lot at the park completed. It also appears that they were kind enough to fill in one of the sunken areas on Noel St. with some of the asphalt.
* The LMIG grant for 2025 should have opened in July. I hope to submit it as soon as I get a chance. But as just mentioned some of the bad areas on Noel have been filled in.
* I received notice that GMA is holding their District 9 Fall meeting September 24th from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at the Mount Vernon Community House (located at 511 College St.) If anyone is interested in attending, please let me know as soon as possible, as usual they are requesting us to register so they can get a body count of attendees as they provide meals during the meeting.
* We received notice that Stacie Avery & Associates finally completed and submitted our RLGF (Report of Local Government Finances and our File Annual Audit on August 5, 2024 and hand delivered our hard copies on August 9, 2024. This was the 2nd year that she filed with an extension on our behalf. I inquired why it’s taking them so long to complete our reports … especially since they’re given 6 months after the end of the year to complete and we’re so small. I have also been reconciling QuickBooks monthly so that doesn’t have to be completed. I’ve made a reminder to contact them in January to complete our reports before they get busy working on other customers' tax filings, etc.
* We received an email from LGRMS indicating the items we submitted for the safety grant were approved. I’ve started purchasing the items we submitted. Once I’ve gotten all of them ordered and received, I will send LGRMS the proof of purchase documentation. They should then send our reimbursement check for the items; it usually takes 2 to 6 weeks. So far I’ve ordered and received our LifeVac kits (2); first aid kits (2); 3 non-slip mats and stair non-slip strips for use at the community center, gift shop and city hall.
* I called to get the cost of the purchase of 2 signs to install at the park. One is for Playground Rules which provides generic items such as No Rough Playing or Yelling Permitted, etc. The other is for a custom sign (using reflective aluminum - visible at night, 7-10 yr. durability, etc.) which will allow us to provide the name Bell Parking Area (acknowledging Russ Bell for donating the area to the city) and PARK CLOSED From SUNSET to SUNRISE. The cost for the rules is $54.25 and the custom sign is $ . We’ll also need to purchase 2 Green Baked Enamel Post (size 3.0625” x 84”) for $61.05 ea.
* I’ve noticed & Sue has also brought it to my attention concerning the funds for the community center. She has mentioned there hasn’t been anyone renting the building lately except residents and believes we should increase the rental cost some for those to help offset the electricity, cleaning cost and supplies needed for the facility. Vote?
* I contacted the engineering company (Hofstadter) that helped during the installation of our sewer system. I met with Mr. Dale Sapp, Darel Corley and Vince Meadows to discuss a plan of action to address our current problem with the saturation of rain water into the sewer system. Mr. Sapp suggested that we have a smoke test done since our running of the cameras in the lines didn’t produce any results. He was kind enough to contact Mr. Charles McCann with the Georgia Rural Water Association for us. He informed us that since we are members of the association the test should be free. I met later with Mr. McCann and scheduled the test to be done on August 20, 2024. He did check some of the manholes while he was here and mentioned that he noticed some frogs within the line which is very unusual. Sue informed the residents of the test. Mr. McCann also mentioned that they have someone that can assist us with determining the fees that we need to charge for our water & sewer services. I will reach out to them once we can get everything completed.
* I’ve also been collecting information to present to the Lyons City Council concerning the cost that they are charging us for the processing. I intend to schedule a meeting as soon as possible. I’m going to reach out to their Mayor Willis NeSmith, Jr. to see if it would be best to talk with them during their monthly workshop meeting or council meeting. The workshop should allow me enough time to present things in detail and allow them time to review before their vote.
* Thursday, August 29th from 2:00pm - 3:30pm at the Vidalia Municipal Annex building the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission has scheduled their Final Steering Committee Review for the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan. This meeting is to review the updated Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan draft and identify any changes, modifications, corrections, or additions that need to be made to the plan draft before they submit the final draft to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for review.
* We have late fees for those residents that are paying their water bills after the due date. We are also imposing a $100 reconnection fine should their water be turned off due to nonpayment, I believe that, if NECESSARY (and limited not to be used excessively) someone may make a partial payment as long as they pay the remainder (in full) by the following week. If it’s not paid in full then their water is disconnected. What do you vote for the residents that aren’t paying their bills in full and only making partial payments? We can also have Sue send a notice of the decision in the next water bill and also have a statement signed by myself and the council available in the city hall office. This will hopefully assist Sue if anyone comes and informs her they’re only making a partial payment. We also need to ensure that we’re getting final meter readings as soon as we’re notified someone is moving out.
* While reviewing GMA’s All Mayors Community emails, I came across one of the mayors inquiring about how to claim the City’s 2023 Property Tax Relief Grant. This is referring to the law that Governor Brian Kemp signed into law HB 18 in 2023. It would provide $950 million in property tax relief to homeowners by reducing the assessed value of Georgia qualified homesteaded properties up to $18,000. I’m going to look further into this and see if we qualify for anything.