

CITY OF SANTA CLAUS COUNCIL MEETING  
October 15, 2024  
AGENDA

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

- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- Swear new council member (Matt Lynn)
- READING OF MINUTES/APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
- COMMENTS/PUBLIC ISSUES
- FINANCIAL REPORT (Hand out)

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

**GARDEN** - Brenda Sells - Updates?

**PARK** - Monte Powell - Updates?

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

**ROADS AND APPEARANCE** - Update?

**2. OLD BUSINESS:**

- Brenda has gotten someone to get the electricity done for the gift shop and the lights over in the garden area. Apparently, Luis' help has cut some of the wires. It might be a good idea while we have the electrician here, to let him look at the chandelier in the community center also. See if he can determine why, it keeps blowing bulbs in certain areas. Rod Harden completed the electrical hook up for the new storage building. At the time I went to check if it worked, it still wasn't functional.
- I've gotten in touch with my cousin's husband (James Clements) to see if he'll help with our 'little library'.... Get one, Leave one. He'll try and get started on it sometime in October - due to the weather. Due to the current city circumstances following Hurricane Helene I'm going to postpone working on this project until we have more time to address it. In the meantime, we can store the cabinet in our new storage building.
- I've sent his property information envelope again via certified mail to Mr. Duerfeldt. I checked Sunday, September 15th on status. Tracking showed alert that it was undeliverable as of Friday, September 13th and being returned to sender. We've received the envelope back so when I can get time and schedule a meeting with our attorney Tina, I'll see what we can do to get this matter resolved.
- September 24th GMA held their District 9 Fall meeting at the Mount Vernon Community House. Those that attended were Sue, Brenda and Donita.

**3. NEW BUSINESS:**

- Now that our parking lot has been paved and we've received the signs and posts. Brenda is getting with Luis to have them installed. Once everything has been finished, I'll take some photos to add to our Facebook page. Maybe we should get Luis to go ahead and put the 3 stop signs needing to be put up at the intersection of Reindeer and Salem also. I had Luis get his help to clean the right of way area in front of the Dollar General store. I also unlocked the lift station gate so they could cut in there also.
- Has the information been updated concerning the cost increase for residents renting the community center? I transferred \$5,000 over into the account from our general account to help maintain its functions. Brenda brought up a good idea that since we're currently turning off the ice machine when it's not being used, maybe we should also adjust the thermostats at the community center also when it's not in use. This should help with the electrical bill.

## CITY OF SANTA CLAUS COUNCIL MEETING

October 15, 2024

### AGENDA

- I've purchased and received the items (LifeVac, mats, non-slip tape, and the first-aid kits) for the safety grant that were approved. I've contacted Triton Fire & Safety (Michael Carroll) about him getting the items that we were allowed, installed and ordered. Once we get him to finish and supply us with the invoice, 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. I've already started putting out & distributing the items that we have gotten.
- I met with Lyons Mayor (Willis NeSmith, Jr) and their City Manager (Jason Hall) Wednesday, August 28th. I discussed and presented them with information concerning the cost that they are charging us for the processing. I texted Willis Thursday, September 5th inquiring on how their council meeting went and if there was any change. He responded that they didn't discuss it at their regular meeting and that they'll discuss it at their work session meeting at the end of the month. I inquired if it is something that I should be at that I don't want to keep this dragging on from one month to the next. He is under the assumption that our biggest problem isn't with the rates that it's with our infiltration and believes that we'll see a significant difference when we get the cleanouts, etc. fixed. But my goal is to address both as it needs to be adjusted also.
- Darel's guys started Monday afternoon (September 16th) working on the issues that were listed on the smoke test list. They had to come back as in some areas they didn't have all the materials they needed to fix the issue at that time. These have since been addressed and fixed, they completed September 20th thankfully before the hurricane came.
- I had a phone conversation with Mr. Bill Powell with Georgia Rural Water Association. I provided him with the information and he was able to provide us with a water/sewer rate analysis. I've provided you with a copy of his report. We need to schedule a time for him to come and present his findings to the residents. I'd like to get this done as soon as he's available. However, I do think that we should hold off implementing the increase until the first of next year. In light of the recent hurricane and Christmas coming I think this might be an awful lot for residents to bear.
- I went Thursday, August 29th to the Vidalia Municipal Annex building for the Final Steering Committee Review of the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan that the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission had scheduled. I reviewed the plan and made a couple revisions. They emailed the updated draft for us to review again and make 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. I did email them back with a couple of the changes that still hadn't been updated from before. I have a printed copy of the draft ... It is 124 pages so I didn't print the whole report but just printed the pages that seemed to be updates from the copy they gave me earlier. I pieced together the two drafts. It is available if anyone would like to look at or review it.
- I requested information from Harris concerning 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've gotten the forms to submit and I'm going to try and meet with Lyons City Clerk (Lynn Rowland) to get some assistance in filling them out. She's currently out of the office until Wednesday, September 18th. I still need to get with Lynn but trying to let everyone get any fires put out that need addressing from due to Hurricane Helene.

## CITY OF SANTA CLAUS COUNCIL MEETING

October 15, 2024

### AGENDA

- We also had a nice meeting with Toombs County, Lyons and Vidalia officials Tuesday, September 10th. It was good to be able to get updates from the others as to what they were doing. Eddie brought up the suggestion that they could use our community center as a future meeting place. If you weren't able to attend, I would recommend trying to go in the future. I believe they have them twice a year. Just a nice get together with FOOD!
- We need to check on and get bids for doing the pressure washing of the fences, etc. Jimmy Warren has done it for us the past few years. However, last year we got way behind in decorating due to him having issues with his back and getting it done on time for us. We looked at the gift shop roof and I believe we can go another year without having it cleaned since we had it cleaned last year. It doesn't have the black mildew on it like last year. By not having to do that area, we can leave those decorations that are still up alone except replace the bows if they need it. We received 2 estimates, those need to be reviewed to determine who's going to do the job. We need to get them contacted as soon as possible to get this done so we can get decorations up.
- I noticed that we have about 3 lights out on our walkway here at city hall that are out. I'm going to try and replace the batteries and see if that fixes the problem. I'm also going to try and go to Alpha Lock in Vidalia. I want to see if they can make some copies of our older storage building key and the key that is to the combination lock at the lift station. I've ordered/received the replacement batteries I just need to install. Hopefully this will fix the problem otherwise we'll have to get replacements. I was able to get a space key made for the lift station lock but the one for the storage buildings still didn't work. Whenever I get a chance, I'll see if Robin has any replacement keys ... I believe the buildings were originally purchased from them.
- I received an email confirmation from Tindall (Jon Tindall) that they have submitted our Lead Service Line Inventory information that is due in October.
- Darel Corley contacted me Monday, September 16th inquiring if I would reach out to Vidalia to see if we can get them to send their vacuum truck to get the grease balls out of the lift station. He's trying to get it done before it gets cold. I contacted their city manager (Josh Beck) and he's going to get in touch with Darel to schedule a time to get it done. I've since reached out to Darel and they haven't gotten this done yet, he's put it off for the moment. He's got Tony's number and they're going to get it in the next couple of weeks.
- You need to be aware that we will be receiving some unexpected cost for service work concerning the lift station due to the hurricane. Darel had to work several additional hours and he also had to call in Xylem out of Savannah - they're the Flyt company. They had to look at the voltage for the pumps because they were off. Turned out that the problem was actually with Altamaha EMC. The pumps and panel were all good.
- I was able to contact our local EMS representative (Lynn Moore) and Toombs County manager (John Jones) to get information concerning things that we needed to do to address hurricane issues. Being out of town allowed me internet access so I was able to check emails and get information and post it on our Facebook page for residents and I was able to contact Zac to have it also posted on our city website. I've given a copy to Sue for her to also distribute it to the residents. I will need to get with John Jones to sign the contract that the county obtained with the company that is doing the debris pickup. They had to obtain this quickly before someone else 'grabbed' them because they are a very good and reputable business. This should be handled through FEMA but just so you know we don't know exactly when those funds will be available.

CITY OF SANTA CLAUS COUNCIL MEETING  
October 15, 2024  
AGENDA

- I have ordered & received some of the candy for the parade(s), possibly the tree lighting and the resident's dinner. I also ordered/received a hammer, screwdrivers for the office and a new tarp to replace the one at the lift station to cover the pump.
- It has come to our attention that we should probably go ahead and address getting all of our roads resurfaced, etc. with the exception of Salem - which we are looking at closing due to it not being used and it costs us to try and maintain. Apparently, the CD that we currently have with Altamaha Bank in Trust was originally set aside for doing our roads. There might be some people that believe we should have already addressed this matter rather than keeping the money, allowing it to draw interest. We have received 3 estimates. I went ahead and submitted the LMIG grant for 2025 to help with this project. I received confirmation that they did approve it. So to finalize this grant I will need to provide information showing that we completed this project. I've transferred the funds and our matching 10% to our Roads account. These funds can help offset the penalty that we will incur from withdrawing the CD. At the time I checked, the penalty for early withdrawal would be \$9,523.53. Do you approve of proceeding with this project and if so, review the estimates that we received and decide who we need to contact to get started. By doing all the roads it will include the section of Noel St. that the LMIG grant covered.
- I had a phone interview with [Dmitri Zlodorev](#) Friday, September 13th. He is a journalist with Sputnik news service in Washington, DC. He reached out to me last year and did an article and is wanting to do another one this year. He was asking about the impressions of Santa Claus, GA, about living here, and how the holiday is going? He also asked if we have some connections with Russia's Grandfather Frost (Ded Moroz). He sent me a link to the Wikipedia site for him. It started me thinking that maybe I can look and see who some other 'Santa Claus' are out there for other nationalities. Depending on what I find we might make a billboard, or something to show the different Santa'?