

City of Santa Claus, Georgia
Regular Monthly Council Meeting

October 15, 2024

The regular meeting of the Santa Claus City Council was held October 15, 2024. Present were Mayor Donita Bowen, Councilmember Brenda Sells, Eddie & Elaine Wright, Matt Lynn, Kathy Joyner, John Fulmer, Wayne Ward, Vince Meadows and Sue Grisham. Renee Wright and Monte Powell were out sick. Due to his frequent illness, Mike Heath resigned as Councilman. Matthew Lynn was sworn as Councilman to fill that seat. The meeting began with the group reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Minutes of August 20, 2024, meeting were read as there was no meeting in September. Minutes were accepted as read.

Old Business: The financial reports were reviewed by the Council. The city sustained damage due to Hurricane Helena during the night of September 26-27, 2024, including electrical power outage and water failure. This was a great issue for the meeting.

The mayor asked for comments by the visitors. Kathy inquired on the sewage bill and stated that, when the generator at the sump pump stopped running, her home had suffered sewage running thru the house for 17 hours following the hurricane. This was discussed at length. John stated the back flow to stop sewage from running into the house has been broken and Donita stated that she will Darel Corley inspect the line. There will be further discussion concerning the rates for water and sewage after some word comes from Lyons concerning the issue. Also, in the near future, there will be a town meeting with Bill Powell of the Georgia Rural Water to discuss water and sewage rates. It was stated that the morning of September 27, Donita went with her mother to her brother's home due to no electricity nor water in Santa Claus. She did contact Brenda that she was leaving town as she is the Mayor pro tem and this was discussed at length. Wayne inquired about why Rudolph Way was not cleared but Salem and Reindeer were after the storm passed. A suggestion was made for the city to obtain a generator for a backup for the well in case of a future power failure. Sue agreed to contact Rod Harden of Southern Electric & Plumbing to replace the electrical box which was torn off the new storage building during the storm. Eddie stated that he has assessed the Gardens and there are about 15 lights on the walking trail that are broken due to trees and limbs falling which need to be replaced a.s.a.p. for safety.

Donita will have the cabinet for the little library moved to storage for this time. She has re-sent a certified letter to Cliff Duerfeldt with no response. Donita, Brenda and Sue attended the GMA District 9 meeting in Mt. Vernon which was very informative. The parking lot at the Park has been paved and signs for the hours of operation and rules for the park have been ordered. Council agreed to name the new parking lot "Bell Parking Lot" in honor of Russ Bell who donated the property to the city. Luis Nino has cut the right-of-way at the Dollar General as it is city right-of-way.

New Business: October 15, 2024 meeting -page 2- Following the smoke test in the sewer system, Darel Corley's workers have corrected all areas compromising the system hopefully alleviating the excess surface water into the system. Darel suggested Donita contact the city of Vidalia requesting that they come out and vacuum the sump pump out before winter. Due to the hurricane, there will be additional expenses for the generator at the sump pump, per Darel. Jon Tindall of Tindall Enterprises informed us that the Lead Service Line Inventory List due in October has been submitted to the state. Donita is meeting with Lynn Moore of Toombs Emergency Agency to discuss property tax relief program. Pressure washing bids were reviewed with Council voting on L & L Carpet Cleaning to clean needed areas.

The city is gearing up for the holidays. Donita has ordered candy to throw to the kids at the Lyons Christmas Parade and also a tarp to cover the ~~generator~~ ^{Sump Pump}. Residents are reminded monthly by letter of upcoming activities for the holidays.

Repaving of all city streets was discussed. The C.D. at Altamaha Bank has been set aside for this purpose by past city administration. Donita has inquired with Altamaha Bank and learned the penalty for early withdrawal of the C.D. is \$9,523.53. Bids were reviewed with Council agreeing on Sikes Civil LLC, the lowest bid, at \$492.313. The project will begin in January 2025. Donita will contact someone to repair the fence around the Sump pump area hopefully before the holidays.

Eddie plans to run his train around the Reindeer Trail for Trick or Treat on Thursday, October 31 for all the kids to enjoy.

Following the devastation on our county, John Jones, Toombs Co. Manager, has contracted to have all city and county debris be picked up and removed from all residences and business. As mayor, Donita has signed off on the agreement on behalf of Santa Claus.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Donita Bowen, Mayor

