



# CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH

CITY COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 19, 2020

Council Meeting Room

Special Called Meeting

6:30 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**

James Roberts Jr., Pastor of Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, led in Prayer and Mayor Norton led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL - CLERK OF COUNCIL**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Gary Norton	Mayor	Present	
Linda Smith	Council Member	Present	
Donald Hodges	Council Member	Present	
Mark Stephens	Council Member	Present	
Glenn Jones	Council Member	Present	
Thomas Barbee	Council Member	Present	
James L. Coursey	City Attorney	Present	
Phil Jones	Consultant/City Administrator	Absent	
Shanta Scarboro	Clerk of Council	Present	
Brian Harvey	Director of Development Services	Present	
Lance Moore	Chief of Fire Operations	Present	
Tiffany Lancaster	Director of Leisure Services	Present	
Lee Sherrod	Interim Chief of Police	Present	
Chris Lee	Project Manager	Present	

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Council Member Thomas Barbee made a motion to approve the agenda with the following corrections:

1. Under **New Business** for the Regular City Council Meeting on November 21, 2019 that Item # H and # I be corrected to reflect that former Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson did not recuse herself from voting, she voted naye/no.

2. Councilman Barbee also stated that "I'd like to read a statement" under **Communications & Petitions**.

Clerk of Council, Shanta Scarboro, stated "I will go back and listen to the recording from the November 21, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting and if it is in fact that Ms. Johnson did vote no and not recuse herself then the minutes will be corrected."

Seconded by Council Member Linda Smith. Vote was unanimous.

**5. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

Council Member Glenn Jones recognized Hugh "Trip" Tollison, President and CEO of the Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA).

**6. ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS**

There were none to report.

**7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Council Member Mark Stephens made a motion for the **Adoption of Minutes** with the proposed change by Council Member Thomas Barbee stated under **Approval of Agenda**. Seconded by Council Member Glenn Jones. Vote was unanimous.

A. City Council - Regular Meeting - Nov 21, 2019 6:30 PM

During the **Approval of Agenda**, Council Member Thomas Barbee made a motion to approve the agenda with the following change:

1. Under **New Business** for the Regular Called Meeting on November 21, 2019 that Item # H and # I be corrected to reflect that Mayor Pro Tem did not recuse herself from voting, she voted naye/no.

Clerk of Council, Shanta Scarboro, stated "I will go back and listen to the recording from that meeting and if it is in fact that Ms. Johnson did vote no and not recuse herself then the minutes will be corrected."

The motion was seconded by Council Member Linda Smith and the vote was unanimous.

Therefore, this item was tabled until the Clerk of Council is able to determine whether or not Ms. Johnson voted "naye/no" or "recused" herself from the vote on both items # H and # I under **New Business** during the November 21, 2019 meeting. The outcome will be stated during the next Regular City Council Meeting on Thursday, February 27, 2020.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>TABLED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Linda Smith, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

B. City Council - Regular Meeting - Dec 19, 2019 6:30 PM

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Glenn Jones, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

C. City Council - Special Called Meeting - Jan 9, 2020 6:30 PM

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Glenn Jones, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

D. City Council - Regular Meeting - Jan 21, 2020 6:30 PM

**RESULT:** ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]  
**MOVER:** Mark Stephens, Council Member  
**SECONDER:** Glenn Jones, Council Member  
**AYES:** Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

E. City Council - Special Called Meeting - Feb 6, 2020 6:30 PM

**RESULT:** ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]  
**MOVER:** Mark Stephens, Council Member  
**SECONDER:** Glenn Jones, Council Member  
**AYES:** Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

## 8. COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS

Council Member Thomas Barbee congratulated his colleague and fellow veteran and welcomed Mr. Hodges on his appointment onto Council. Councilman Barbee went on to also state that "I look forward to working with him, I know he will do a great job. I also want to thank the Governor, Mayor Kemp and his staff. We reached to him and his office for this appointment and he listened to our concerns. I'd also like to apologize to all the constituents and business community who got stuck in the middle of a political tug-of-war, but I can assure you that at no time that there was ever any ill-will toward anyone or any project that has been before this Council. The last two months have not been about missing meetings, the delay was about a larger issue of respect for this community and the representation that we desperately need on Council.

We all know that there have been issues with the current Mayor and Council in the past; we need to work on this because we can do a better job. We must do a better job, but it must be a mutual agreement. Again, this has not been about missing Council meetings, it's always been about a bigger picture of how the City needs to move forward and operate as we should be operating according to the Charter. Powers have been granted to the Mayor and withhold from Council. There have been two independent government entities that have looked at our Charter and they've said that it is still a Weak-Mayor, Strong-Council form of government. But to this date, the opinion of the current City Attorney is opposite. We are working hard on that; me and my colleague have took a stand and attempted to shine the light on the wrong doings that have occurred over the previous two years so that this does not continue to happen. We must move forward; we have realized when you do take a stand for the truth, you get ostracized, talked about, you be belittled and you be lied upon. But we are moving forward; we have a full Council now, except for one more appointment which I hope the Mayor will appoint next month. And I'm back; me and my wife love this City and I will continue to represent it with all of my heart and my energy for positive change. I thank you and God Bless."

Mayor Gary Norton stated that he would like to tell his version of this story. "I'd like to say thank you to Glenn Jones, Jimmy Coursey; we went and had a meeting with the Governor and asked him to appoint Herschel Hodges and it happen just the other day. Thank you'll very much."

Council Member Linda Smith wanted to go on record to state that "he indicated, Mr. Barbee my colleague, that they were taking a stand for truth and that people have lied. There have been indications that there have been back-door deals and that's not true. You need to know the facts before you say something like that. But, Mr. Barbee stated something about taking a stand and I want you to know that the Mayor and I hired an attorney to help us and it was our hard earned money that we used. Close family and a few friends helped us raise the money that we had to have for that lawyer. I want you to know that we took money out of our own pockets to seek the truth and get down to the bottom of it. And I appreciate everyone that approached us and encouraged us, and the very close friends that donated to it. I want you to know, like Mr. Barbee has said, God has blessed this City and I thank each and everyone of you."

**9. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Council Member Mark Stephens made a motion to approve the **Committee Reports** and make them part of the minutes. Seconded by Council Member Thomas Barbee. Vote was unanimous.

## A. Committee Reports

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

**10. CONSENT AGENDA**

Council Member Glenn Jones made a motion to approve the **Consent Agenda**. Seconded by Council Member Thomas Barbee. Vote was unanimous.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Glenn Jones, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

- A. Georgia Municipal Employees Defined Benefit Retirement Plan Adoption Agreement
- B. Agreement with Fun Time, Inc. for the 2020 Stand Up For America Day
- C. Agreement with Music Garden for the 2020 Stand Up For America Day
- D. Change Order No. 1 for the Mobley Park Drainage Improvements Phase 2
- E. Pay Request No. 4 for the Mobley Park Drainage Improvements Phase 2
- F. Pay Request No 6 for the Hendley Rd & Monteith Rd Roadway Improvement Project

**11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There were none to report.

**12. NEW BUSINESS**

## A. Second Amendment to Intergovernmental Contract/Hotel-Motel Tax Agreement

James L. Coursey, Jr., City Attorney, addressed Council regarding this agenda item. Mr. Coursey stated that the agreement is a formality and has been in place for a number of years. It is simply established to extend the Hotel-Motel agreement to 2052. All other municipalities have approved this agreement and recommends that Council give it favorable consideration.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

## B. Site Plan Review Application (Specific) 1500 Crossgate Road Dec 2019

Phillip McCorkle, McCorkle & Johnson, LLP, was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council.

Mr. McCorkle stated that the site plan presented to Council is the same site plan for the Amazon building and only one change has been made, based upon comments regarding vans turning left onto the road. So this has been changed to allow only right turn out.

**Discussion 1**

Council Member Thomas Barbee asked Mr. McCorkle if it's possible to put in an 18" high, 24" concrete pork chop to prevent trucks from turning left?

Mr. McCorkle responded to Councilman Barbee's question by stating that the new site plan shows an 18" curb & gutter, 1 foot high, that will be put up to keep trucks from turning left.

**Discussion 2**

James L. Coursey, Jr., City Attorney, asked Mr. McCorkle if the drainage issue indicated on the December 6, 2019 report furnished by Thomas & Hutton has been resolved? There was some concern that since this property backs up to Bonnybridge Road area that there was not going to be any overflow into that area.

Mr. McCorkle stated that the issue has been resolved.

**Discussion 3**

Max Dunigan, 902 Barnsley Road, wanted to confirm the location of the project and was wondering if there was any consideration to put in a quiet hour for the train?

Mayor Norton stated that the location will be behind the Parker's on Crossgate Road, on the west side of Jimmy DeLoach. Mayor Norton also stated that the City has tried in the past to request that the trains not blow the whistle, but were told that the City would have to put up \$100,000.00 posts just to begin the process.

Mr. McCorkle stated that at this time, this location will not be a rail serve site. Should it become so in the future, that will be the time to address that issue.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Linda Smith, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

- C. Site Plan Review (Specific) Moe's Rice Hope 7-0906-04-030

Jay Andrews, Jay Maupin, PE Engineering, Inc., was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council.

Mr. Andrews stated that this project is for the proposed Moe's restaurant and supplemental retail shops that will also be available.

**Discussion 1**

Mayor Norton asked for the specific location of the project.

Mr. Andrews stated that it is located at the southern entrance of Rice Hope, between the AT&T and Pump & Go Gas Station.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Linda Smith, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Glenn Jones, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

- D. Site Plan Review (Specific) Newport Cove Apartments 7-0976-02-021

Jessica Vick, Robert Civil Engineering, was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council.

Ms. Vick stated that she was present as a representative of the company to request approval for an apartment complex off Highway 21 that will consist of 288 units and the infrastructure to support it. Ms. Vick also stated that the engineering firm will be purchasing the adjacent parcel of land to bring a second entrance.

**Discussion 1**

Council Member Glenn Jones asked where will the second entrance be located?

Ms. Vick responded by stating that the second entrance will be right next to BoJangles at Scott Road.

Council Member Glenn Jones went on to state that this addition will now give two entrances and exits for residents and public safety personnel, and thanked Ms. Vick for working to make this happen.

**Discussion 2**

Council Member Thomas Barbee asked if this was going to be a gated community?

Ms. Vick stated that there will be a gate post, but it will not be closed off.

**Discussion 3**

Jill Litten, 8 Tiller Way, asked that with the two entrances will the first entrance come directly from Newport? If so, residents are concerned about the amount of traffic that already exists at the entrance. Ms. Litten went on to state that her district is currently without representation since the passing of former Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson.

Ms. Vick stated that with the addition of the second entrance the traffic at the main Newport entrance will not increase and the Department of Transportation (DOT) has planned to improve the intersection.

Council Member Linda Smith wanted to address Ms. Litten's concern that no one is appointed to represent her district. Councilwoman Smith stated that all Council Members are appointed to represent her and her district and that both she and Council Member Thomas Barbee are At-Large and that the issue of the vacant District 3 Seat will be resolved by the end of the month.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Linda Smith, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Smith, Hodges, Stephens, Jones, Barbee

**13. RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES/PROCLAMATIONS**

There were none to report.

**14. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There were none to report.

**15. PUBLIC COMMENTS - REGISTERED SPEAKERS**

James Roberts Jr., Pastor of Mt. Moriah Baptist Church addressed Mayor and Council to state that he has been in Port Wentworth for 27 years pastoring in the Monteith and Meinhard Road area. Pastor Roberts stated that his main concern is that the residents of the area do not want any warehouses built in the area. Pastor Roberts went on to ask that Council consider the people who have been living in the area for a long time.



Debra Matthews, resident of Richmond Hill, Georgia, stated the she is a Minister at Mt. Moriah Baptist Church and simply wanted to ask Mayor and Council if there was a way to better communicate to the public what is being considered for the area of Monteith and Meinhard Road so that the people can stay informed.

Willie Johnson, 250 Monteith Road, stated to Mayor and Council that the residents of Monteith and Meinhard Road don't want to see any warehouses go up in there area. Mr. Johnson also mentioned that Highway 21 at the CVS need a turning light.

Linwood Griner, 1112 Meinhard Road, addressed Mr. Johnson's concern regarding the turning light at CVS by stating that it is an easy fix; simply allow one side to go at a time.

Trevor Ferguson, 6 Laurel Ridge Court, approached Mayor and Council to discuss a complaint he filed against a City worker and that he has yet to be contacted regarding the matter.

Julius Roberson, 225 Grant Road, stated that he has been in Port Wentworth for 47 years and that every time he has attended a Council meeting something was done, until the last four meetings that were held. Mr. Robinson urged Council to move forward and get the business of the City done. Mr. Robinson also inquired as to how the selection was made for the appointment of the District 1 Council Seat.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Council Member Glenn Jones made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Thomas Barbee Council Member. Vote was unanimous.

  
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Mayor Gary Norton

The foregoing minutes are true and correct and approved by me on this 27th day of February, 2020.

ATTEST:

  
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Shanta M. Scarboro, Clerk of Council