



CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH

CITY COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 23, 2023

Houston House

Regular Meeting

7:00 PM

**8000 GA HIGHWAY 21
PORT WENTWORTH, GA 31407**

- 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
- 2. PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL - CLERK OF COUNCIL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS - REGISTERED SPEAKERS**
- 7. ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS**
- 8. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**
 - A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes - January 26, 2023
- 9. COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS**
- 10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**
- 11. CONSENT AGENDA**
- 12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
- 13. NEW BUSINESS**
- 14. RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES/PROCLAMATIONS**
 - A. Certified City of Civility
 - B. Elected Officials Compensation – 1st Reading
 - > Public Hearing
 - > Action
- 15. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - A. Litigation
 - B. Personnel
 - C. Real Estate
- 16. ADJOURNMENT**



City Council
7224 GA Highway 21
Port Wentworth, GA 31407

Meeting: 02/23/23 7:00 PM
Department: All
Category: Agreement
Prepared By: Zahnay Smoak
Department Head: Steve Davis

SUBMITTED

AGENDA ITEM (ID # 2802)

DOC ID: 2802

Certified City of Civility

Issue/Item: GMA Embrace Civility campaign has been created to foster respect, trust and belonging.

Background: Civility is more than just politeness. It is about disagreeing without disrespect, seeking common ground as a starting point for dialogue about differences, listening past one's preconceptions and teaching others to do the same. Civility is the hard work of staying present even with those with whom we have deep-rooted and fierce disagreement.

Facts and Findings: GMA has identified 9 Pillars of Civility and a Civility Pledge

1. **Be considerate of others' opinions.** Is okay to agree to disagree.
2. **Manage your emotions.** Get curious instead of furious.
3. **A silent voice is not always a weak voice.** Sometimes it's okay not to respond.
4. **Be kind!** Make your point about the issue, not the person.
5. **Actively listen,** to learn how to Engage respectfully.
6. **Think about the impact** of your actions and not the intent.
7. **Ask questions to learn.** Answer questions with respect.
8. **Remember the acronym QTIP** (Quit Taking It Personal).
9. **Have Empathy!** Just because you have not experienced it, does not mean it does not exist.

CIVILITY PLEDGE

The way we govern ourselves is often as important as the positions we take. Our collective decisions will be better when differing views have had the opportunity to be fully vetted and considered. All people have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy and openness. We value all input. We commit to conduct ourselves at all times with civility and courtesy to each other.

Funding: N/A

Recommendation: Approve

ATTACHMENTS:

- Resolution-Civility (DOCX)

**A RESOLUTION
PLEDGING TO PRACTICE AND PROMOTE CIVILITY IN THE CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Port Wentworth, (the “Council”), the governing body of the City of Port Wentworth, Georgia (the “Municipality”), recognizes that robust debate and the right to self-expression, as protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, are fundamental rights and essential components of democratic self-governance; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further recognizes that the public exchange of diverse ideas and viewpoints is necessary to the health of the community and the quality of governance in the Municipality; and

WHEREAS, the members of City Council, as elected representatives of the community and stewards of the public trust, recognize their special role in modeling open, free and vigorous debate while maintaining the highest standards of civility, honesty and mutual respect; and

WHEREAS, City Council meetings are open to the public and thus how City officials execute their legal duties is on public display; and

WHEREAS, civility by City officials in the execution of their legislative duties and responsibilities fosters respect, kindness and thoughtfulness between City officials, avoiding personal ill will which results in actions being directed to issues made in the best interests of residents; and

WHEREAS, civility between City officials presents an opportunity to set a positive example of conduct and promotes thoughtful debate and discussion of legislative issues, resulting in better public policy and a more informed electorate while also encouraging civil behavior between residents; and

WHEREAS, civility between City officials is possible if each member of the elected body remembers that they represent not only themselves, but the constituents of their district and city; and

WHEREAS, in order to publicly declare its commitment to civil discourse and to express its concern for the common good and well-being of all of its residents, the City Council has determined to adopt this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE

The City of Port Wentworth pledges to practice and promote civility within the governing body as a means of conducting legislative duties and responsibilities.

SECTION TWO

The elected officials of the City Council enact this civility pledge to build a stronger and more prosperous community by advocating for civil engagement, respecting others and their viewpoints, and finding solutions for the betterment of the City of Port Wentworth.

SECTION THREE

This pledge strives to ensure that all communication be open, honest, and transparent as this is vital for cultivating trust and relationships.

Attachment: Resolution-Civility (2802 : Certified City of Civility)

SECTION FOUR

This pledge strives to show courtesy by treating all colleagues, staff and members of the public in a professional and respectful manner whether in-person, online or in written communication, especially when we disagree.

SECTION FIVE

This pledge strives to ensure mutual respect to achieve municipal goals, recognizing that patience, tolerance and civility are imperative to success and demonstrates the Council’s commitment to respect different opinions, by inviting and considering different perspectives, allowing space for ideas to be expressed, debated, opposed, and clarified in a constructive manner.

SECTION SIX

This pledge demonstrates our commitment against violence and incivility in all their forms whenever and wherever they occur in all our meetings and interactions.

SECTION SEVEN

The City of Port Wentworth expects members of the public to be civil in its discussion of matters under consideration by and before the City Council, with elected officials, staff, and each other.

ADOPTED this ___day of _____, 20__.

Mayor

Councilmember

Councilmember

Councilmember

Councilmember

Councilmember

Councilmember

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Attachment: Resolution-Civility (2802 : Certified City of Civility)



City Council
7224 GA Highway 21
Port Wentworth, GA 31407

Meeting: 02/23/23 7:00 PM
Department: All
Category: Ordinance
Prepared By: Zahnay Smoak
Department Head: Steve Davis

14.B

SUBMITTED

AGENDA ITEM (ID # 2801)

DOC ID: 2801

Elected Officials Compensation – 1st Reading

Issue/Item: Elected officials' compensation rates.

Background: Port Wentworth is one of the fastest growing cities in Georgia, growing from 3,000 to almost 13,000 over the last 20 years. The elected officials compensation has not changed during this time but the amount of time invested, training and preparation to sit on this legislative body has greatly increased.

Facts and Findings:

Due to rapid inflation, rapid growth, and comparison with other cities the city wishes to increase the compensation rates. Below is the ranges of salaries for comparable cities.
Council (high \$20,256/low \$2,400)
Mayor (high \$24,990/low \$3,300)

**New compensation rates will not go into effect until January 2024.*

Funding:

Proposed compensation rates:
Council \$14,400 (\$1,200 monthly)
Mayor \$14,400 (\$1,200 monthly)

Recommendation: Approve

ATTACHMENTS:

- 23.02.23 - Elected Pay Ord (DOCX)

ORDINANCE NO. 23-02-XX

**STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF CHATHAM
CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPENSATION
OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, it is necessary from time to time to modify the City's ordinances; and

WHEREAS the Mayor and City Council is tasked with the authority to adopt and provide for such ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations which it deems necessary, expedient, or helpful for the peace, good order, protection of life and property, health, welfare, sanitation, comfort, convenience, prosperity, and well-being of the inhabitants of the City; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to City Charter Sec. 2.33 the City is authorized to set the compensation of Mayor and City Council for their service in such amounts as may be approved by ordinance; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 36-35-4 the City is authorized to fix the salary, compensation, and expenses of its municipal governing authority; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 36-35-4 this Ordinance follows the requirements of subsections (a)(1) through (a)(3); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Georgia Attorney General Opinion 1980 Op. Att'y Gen. No. U-80-27 the City is permitted to amend the municipal governing authority's compensation with such amendment to become effective for the entire Mayor and City Council after the taking of office of only a portion of the Council, when the municipality has staggered terms; and

WHEREAS, this proposed Ordinance is intended to fully comply with each and every relevant provision of the City Ordinances, City Charter, Georgia State Law, and Georgia Constitution, and Mayor and Council desire and intent this Ordinance to be implemented and implemented to so comply; and

NOW, THEREFORE, that while in regular session THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH HEREBY ORDAIN as follows:

- I. There is created a new Chapter in the City’s Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2.20 – Compensation of Mayor and City Council, to read as follows:

Sec. 2.20 – Compensation of Mayor and City Council

- (a) The monthly monetary compensation shall be set at \$1,200 each for the Mayor and each member of City Council during their term in office.
 - (b) The monetary compensation of subsection (a) of the section shall not prohibit or limit the City from providing other benefits to the Mayor and City Council, as permitted by the City and state law, such as but not limited to insurance, retirement, or pension benefits.
- II. The City’s Code of Ordinances Sections 2.21 through 2.28 shall remain “Reserved.”
 - III. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.
 - IV. This Ordinance shall become effective upon the swearing in of members of the Council immediately following the election in November 2023.

SO ORDAINED this the _____ day of _____, 2023.

Approved:

Gary Norton, Mayor

Attest:

Zahnay Smoak, City Clerk

First reading: _____(date)

Second reading: _____(date)

Attachment: 23.02.23 - Elected Pay Ord (2801 : Elected Officials Compensation – 1st Reading)