

CITY OF KEYSVILLE, GA

A City Where Everybody Is Somebody

City Council
LINDA WILKES, MAYOR
Ms. Sharon Neely
Ms. Kathy Couch
Ms. Maggie Terrell



City Administration
Sherell Russ, Interim Administrator
LaTora Lewis, City Clerk

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MINUTES
KEYSVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 13, 2022
TIME: 7:00 PM
LOCATION: KEYSVILLE CITY HALL

Meeting called to order by: Mayor Linda Wilkes.

Councilmembers Present: Linda Wilkes-Davis, Kathy Couch, Sharon Neely, Maggie Terrell

Employee: LaTora Lewis, Ronald O'Brien

Others Present: Marvin Scott, Ruby Rucker, (True Citizen) Shellie Smitley, Jerry Couch, James Neely, Maefield Streetman, Vanessa Washington, Freddie Harden, Harold Kight.

Mayor Wilkes: Welcomed all and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Prayer: Marvin Scott

Absent: N/A

Agenda: Mayor Wilkes asked for the motion to have the minutes approved with necessary corrections. Council Woman Kathy second the motion to have the agenda approved with necessary corrections.

Environmental-Water:

City Clerk:

- Stated several leaks were completed around the city.

Roads & Recreation:

Mayor Linda Wilkes:

- Mentioned that the city signs are coming along great and that there was one issue with the signs by the city nursing home, but the issue is being resolved.
- Mayor Linda Wilkes also suggested if the column was moved will it be ok with the council to put the signs down at the city park.
- Council Woman Kathy Couch suggested that the sign be put up on Hephzibah Keysville Road.
- Mayor Linda Wilkes asked about the old basketball court she asked for any suggestions about what to do with the concrete.

Tennis court

Splash Pad

New Pavilion

Skate area

- The city park is still under construction.

Emergency/Personnel:

Council Woman Sharon Neely:

- Stated the light on Tyrone Brooks is constantly flickering on and off and that it will be flagged to be fixed.

City Clerk LaTora Lewis:

- Stated that marking the light pole will help get the light fixed faster.

Council Woman Sharon Neely:

- Stated that the city of Keysville does not have a Police officer the city has a Code Enforcer.
- Mentioned that there were stray dogs still around the city. The City Clerk and Council Woman Kathy Couch stated that they believe people are dropping the dogs off into the city and leaving them stranded.
- Code Enforcer Ronald stated he called the county animal patrol to come out for the dogs.

Building & Housing:

Council Woman Kathy:

- Stated that the city looks good.
- She also mentioned a few of the residents for example.
- Council Woman Kathy Couch stated there were some concerns about the code enforcement officer working on the weekends.
- Council Woman Kathy Couch also stated once the city gets rid of some of the old houses around the city it would look a lot better.

Council Woman Maggie Terrell:

- **Financial Statement**

Complaint/Concerns:

Finished Business:

Mayor Linda Wilkes:

Introduced city code Enforcement officer Ron O'Brien

Ron O'Brien:

- Talked about the city being cleaned and looking nice
- Mentioned different residents that needs to clean up their properties.
- Stated that the city is trying to put a Municipal Court in the city hall.
- Thanked the residents for his position.

- Went over code enforcement codes with Council Woman Terrell.

Mayor Linda Wilkes:

- Stated that the projects that were put into place are almost complete.
- Stated that the city has two new vehicles.
- Splost proposed amount \$607,000 projects turned into the county by May30th, 2025.
- **Three estimates for water tower**
10-year plan/\$165,000
Maintenance plan includes cleaning and painting/ \$100,000
\$133,000/just to keep the tower clean.

New Business:

Harold Kight:

- Stated that the Code enforcement officer came to his property and stated a neighbor was complaining of the mess he has in his place of business.
- Stated he called two of the council members Maggie Terrell and Kathy Couch and they both stated they were unaware of a code enforcer.

Council Members

- Stated they were aware on Saturday an code enforcer was hired.

Harold Kight:

- Stated how can the mayor hire without the city council and that the charter was put in to place for the mayor to use.
- Stated code enforcement sent an ordinance out and said that code enforcement called him back and said the city does not have an ordinance on cars.
- Stated Mr. O'Brien mailed a certified letter to him, and it was an illegal document stating.
- Stated Mr. O'Brien goes up to Mr. Snipes shop to have the city tractor fixed. Mr. Snipes was unavailable and then Mr. Harold Kight says Mr. O'Brien asked him about fixing the city tractor and he came down to the city hall looked at the tractor, he took the tractor to his shop, and he fixed it.
- Mr. Kight asked why we would hire a code enforcer before hiring a judge.
- Asked why does the code enforcer ride around the city on the weekend's wasting gas.
- Stated that he was told that code enforcement had a dog in his car down at the city park and his concern was if he is not a police officer and that dog bites someone the city would be held responsible.
- States the city should have a FT certified water person
- Stated the building at the plant needs a roof

Mayor Linda Wilkes: in response to Mr. Kight

- Stated the issues concerning the code enforcer was resolved prior to city council meeting so what is the problem now.
- If we hire a judge first, how would we be able to pay them without a code enforcer.
- Stated that she has the power to hire her department heads and also stated that the city council knew the city was looking for a code enforcer.
- Stated that our city code enforcer is certified in code enforcement and a few other things too. The letter sent to Mr. Kight in reference to location of his property was not being used a legal document but for information purposes only.
- Stated our water is regulated and approved by EPD

- Stated she is fully capable of reading and understanding the charter and her duties as the mayor.
- That her position was a strong mayor, and it could be looked up in the city charter.
- Stated that when she came into the office the city did not have money, could not write checks anywhere in the CSRA,
- took 4 years just to find someone who would touch the audits
- Lights were being turned off,
- the city was borrowing money from citizens to pay light bills,
- has an office full of incompetent people,
- no documents were available,
- had to organize the office from scratch,
- asked the residents to stop complaining because she is doing the best to keep the city together and bring to a new level.

Mr. Kight replied that he and Mr. Harden was not part of the city council at that time, that was Ms. Neely and Ms. Couch.

Council Woman Kathy Couch:

- Stated that she was unaware of the mayor hiring a code enforcer
- And she also read section 4.15 from the charter which stated that the council has the power to hire and fire.

Council Woman Sharon Neely

- Stated that Code Enforcement drives around on the weekend to contact residents that he cannot contact through the work week because people have 9-5 jobs, so the weekends are better.

Ronald O'Brien

- Stated that he provides his own gas from out of pocket.

Freddie Harden

- Stated he was part of the city council years ago
- He ran for Mayor and lost by 11 votes
- Asked when the city charter was revived.
- The city was a weak mayor position when he was a part of the city. The council made all the decision on the hiring and firing the mayor was only a carrier.
- Stated citizens called and asked if the mayor can hire or fire employees.
- Stated someone told him if the charter has not been revised, he can get a copy of the charter and he does not have to argue with the mayor and if he has a problem getting it that they may contact the secretary of state.
- Asked for a date that the charter has been revised, asked if he could be shown in the charter where it says that the mayor of Keysville is a strong mayor.
- Stated if someone can tell him what the mayor said to him if not, he was going to call GMA and have the mayor put under investigation and stated he would not do it behind her back it will be upfront.
- Stated he has heard code Enforcement shooting down at the dumpsters where the park is located and stated if Code Enforcement approaches him, he better approach him correctly cause he's not the one.

Mayor Linda Wilkes

- Stated that it does not exactly say in the charters if you are a strong or weak mayor the charter shows the duties of which the mayor is accountable for. States the Mayor was never a weak Mayor, you all made it a weak Mayor.
- Stated if Mr. Harden would like a copy of the charter, then he may come down and request a copy from the city hall or go online.

Council Woman Kathy Couch:

- Read two sections from the city charter
- 4.15 states the council has the power to hire and fire employers.
- 3.21 stating the mayor is the Chief Executive officer of this city and shall possess all executive and administrative powers granted to the city under the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, and all contained in the charter.....
- Stated the mayor could hire and fire the heads of each department in the office.

Council Woman Terrell

- stated the charter needs to be revised and she feels the charter needs to be revised with today's date.

Mayor Linda Wilkes

You can't just change a charter; it must go through the General Assembly in the state of Georgia.

Other Business:

Announcements:

Floor was open for community announcements.

Meeting adjourned

L.Lewis, City Clerk