

CITY OF KEYSVILLE, GA

A City Where Everybody Is Somebody

City Council
LINDA WILKES, MAYOR
Sharon Neely, Vice Mayor
Kathy Couch
Maggie Terrell
Harold Kight
Freddie Harden



Sherell Russ, City Administrator
LaTora Lewis, Water Clerk

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MINUTES
KEYSVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Today's Date: December 11, 2023
Meeting Date: November 13, 2023
TIME: 7:00 PM
KEYSVILLE CITY HALL

Meeting called to order: Mayor Linda Wilkes.

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

Prayer: Maggie Terrell

Councilmembers Present: Linda Wilkes, Kathy Couch, Sharon Neely, Maggie Terrell, Harold Kight, Freddie Harden

Employee: Sherell Russ

Others Present: James Neely, Kathy Brown, Maefield Streetman, Bobbie Powell, George Terrell, Rubeye Rucker, Doug Kidd, Vanessa Washington, John McClellan, Betty Matthews, Robert Matthews, Terry Davis, Frederick Grant, Gwen Williams

Absent:

Agenda: Mayor Wilkes: asked for the motion to have the agenda approved as order of the day.

Council Woman Kathy Couch: made a motion to approve the agenda.

VM Sharon Neely: seconded the motion.

Mayor Linda Wilkes: stated the agenda will stand as order of the day.

Minute Corrections

Minutes: Mayor Wilkes asked for the approval of the minutes with necessary corrections if there are any.

No Corrections Noted.

Motion to Approve Minutes

Councilwoman Kathy Couch

- Made the motion to approve the minutes with the necessary corrections added.

Councilwoman Sharon

- Seconded the motion.

Mayor Linda Wilkes

- The minutes has been approved with no corrections.

Mayor Linda Wilkes: agenda will stand as order of the day.

Committee Reports:

Mayor Linda Wilkes Report

Environmental Water:

Councilman Harold Kight

- Went through and checked the spray fields, they have done a really good job on the sprayfields.
- Trees are still growing up through the fences.
- The key that he got from the city would not open the gate, the reason he got into the gate last time is because the gate was left open and could get in and check the basket.
- I don't know much about the water well.
- Read out leaks that was on the resident side.
- Citizens came to him about the dogs again, and were concerned about pets being killed and the trash being ripped open by dogs.
- Said the citizen was concerned about what to do about the dogs? and Councilman Harold Kight said that he was told to call the humane society and that the residents are charged \$200 per dog to pick them up. Citizen was concerned because they pay taxes and what services does the city receive when the residents' pay taxes?
- Councilman Harold Kight was unsure of the answer and said that he would address the issue at the meeting tonight.
- Councilman Harold Kight asked Mayor Linda Wilkes about the services being received when paying taxes.
- Mayor Wilkes stated the same services that were provided when the city became a city in 1988.
- Stated our taxes are very low and the city only collects about 26,000.00 per year in property taxes, stated if we wanted more, we need to consider raising property taxes.
- Mayor Linda Wilkes answered that the dog pound is owned by Burke County, and stated the residents living in the city of Keysville, are also paying County taxes. Stated the county wants us to get a contract with the them in order to service the dogs. Suggested that the resident call Burke County and ask them about paying taxes in burke county and if they can use the money that is being payed down there to get the dogs.
- Concerned about the pump station being in violation.
- Mayor Linda Wilkes said the city has a priority list from EPD and once the well is completed those things will become a priority.

Emergency and Personal:

VM Sharon Neely

- Went over the light situation, said she had a list stating the lights on Cheatham Street should be repaired on Thursday November 16,2023.
- Asked Sherell was the letter correct.
- Said that Ms. Lewis did not list anything about the other lights reported out.
- Ms. Russ asked that she write down the list of lights.
- VM Neely stated the lights were put into the minutes. Read off the list of lights from the minutes.
- VM Neely stated there was a situation concerning a letter.
- Councilman Harold Kight stated it was the letter head sent to one of his family members concerning back taxes. It was the second notice.
- VM Sharon Neely stated on that letter head it listed Kathy Watts, asked Ms. Russ did the letter ever get corrected?
- Ms. Russ answered yes it was only one mistake.
- Mayor Linda Wilkes mentioned when Ms. Russ did the letters, she accidentally used the old letterhead and not the new one.
- Concerned about the Sheriff's department receiving their appreciation plaque.

- Ms. Russ said that she would order the plaque.

Building & Housing:

Council Woman Kathy Couch

- Still working on tiny house ordinance
- Called Commissioner Abrahams and he gave her a number, she called but never received an answer from the number.
- Mayor Wilkes stated maybe she need to look up the ordinances from other cities that has tiny homes.

City Roads and Recreation:

Councilman Freddie Harden

- Had many damaged roads in the city of Keysville.
- Stated that Ms. Russ was working to get the repairs done.
- Concerned about being able to get information about the estimates for having the roads done.
- Ms. Russ asked did he not understand the paper that was given to him.
- Stated he would like for Ms. Russ to read off the paper.
- Councilman Freddie Harden read the statement.
- Ms. Russ said the statement is broken down to show what was done.
- Asked what was the difference from him picking three estimates and the city picks one and the job gets done?
- Mayor Wilkes stated Mr. Harden was invited to come to the office at anytime.
- Mayor Linda Wilkes stated the city did reach out to three companies and only one responded.

Recreation

- Stated a bunch of wood was laying on the ground.
- Maintenance Terry Davis stated the wood was not on the ground and that it was on the fence.
- Councilman Freddie Harden said that he had pictures, maintenance Terry said he would like to see them.
- Ms. Russ spoke stated she never gave maintenance instructions on what to do with the wood.

Finance:

Council Woman Maggie Terrell

Queensboro Bank Statement October 2023

Wellsfargo Bank Statement October 2023

Charles Walker Human Resource Rental October 2023

Come Home to Keysville Event Report October 2023

- **VM Sharon Neely** stated she had questions and concerns about coming home to Keysville Camp meet vending and the rental of the Charles Walker Building. Stated more vendors were there did reported. **Ms. Russ** stated she went earlier to check the permits but did not return later for a second check.

Old Business:

- Harold Kight had a question about the resolution and concerns of the city employees job title.
- Councilman Harold Kight said it should not take 5 months to sign the resolution.
- City Council, Mayor and Administrator Ms. Russ discussed the reason the resolution was not signed and when it was received.
- City Attorney Doug Kidd asked the mayor will she go to the bank?
- Mayor Linda Wilkes answered yes, she will do that, and said that Sharon Neely is already on the accounts.
- VM Sharon Neely said she was not on all the accounts and that she was only on the Queensboro account and not the Wellsfargo account.
- Councilwoman Maggie Terrell explained what the bank needed from the city council and the mayor as well as the City of Keysville letter head.
- City Attorney Doug Kidd repeated his question to the mayor and said she had until Friday to go to the banks because it has been five months.
- City Attorney Doug Kidd said that he received a letter from the state stating that there were no audits received since 2019.
- Councilman Harold Kight made a motion for the mayor to go to the banks and sign the statement by Friday.
- Council Woman Kathy Couch seconded the motion.
- City Attorney Doug Kidd asked was there a discussion on the motion?
- City Council favored Aye!
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New City Business:

Unfinished Business:

- Councilman Harold Kight asked the city attorney Doug Kidd to clear up a concern?
- In administrative affairs under city clerk / administrator who is the appointee in the charter? Who appoints the city clerk/administrator?
- Attorney Doug Kidd said the city clerk and the city administrator are two different job titles.
- Councilman Harold Kight read administrative section from the charter.
- City Attorney Doug Kidd read section 4113.
- Councilman Harold Kight said that it was ashamed that when you call down to the city hall you can't get an answer, and everyone is outside smoking cigarettes.
- City Council, Mayor, City Attorney Doug Kidd read different sections of the charter about the City Clerk and City administrator.
- Mayor Wilkes stated he needed to read 3.12

Agenda

John McClean, Turnipseed

- Stated his objective was the well.
- Said that he figured out who called EPA and was able to have a conference call with them, Georgia Rural Water and Regional commission, the mayor, and Ms. Russ, were on the phone call with them as well as East Central District office was in the phone call.
- Stated there are plenty of people representing to help get the well completed.
- Stated he has a contractor that needed to get paid, and he also has a well that needs to be built so that he could satisfy a consent with EPD and that's the new goal.
- Stated he asked which boxes needed to be checked off to get the project done.

- EPA has a congressional discretionary fund through EPA. Stated that Turnipseed did not initiate that process because he was trying to move things forward. That is his main objective, to help the city meet its needs.
- It was a good call from his understanding that the city is still eligible for the \$197,000.00 that's eligible EPA use.
- Said that the funds were not eligible for the project that is being constructed today, but they are eligible for other projects.
- Stated that the well is almost 2/3 away being finished. Listed a few things that was already completed at the well. Said there are a few things that has to be constructed.
- Stated there are a few things the city still needs to be eligible for the funds from EPA.
- Stated he sent an email to the engineers.
- Stated there was a meeting held with EPD the mayor, Jeremy, and Ms. Russ. There was a routine inspection with the sewer system and stated there are somethings the has to worked, but they are not violations, that's just somethings the city has to work on.
- EPD said let's get this well done it's the primary focus.
- There has to be a letter written to address those situations.
- Ms. Russ and the Mayor paid \$5,000.00 today.
- Trying to work with EPA on getting a change order.
- Step #2 was paying off Greene's Water Well so that EPA could consider a consent change order.
- Continued to talk about the City Well and the things that has to be done to complete the well.

City Attorney Doug Kidd

- Said he needed to talk about the election situation, and he does not know who rightfully holds their seats or who holds their seats wrongfully.
- From his understanding at least two people had a term this year and should have been on the ballot in November.
- Mrs. Terrell contacted him pretty late in the process so he instantly did some legal research in 20 minutes time and though we could make the deadline to get on the ballot and we couldn't.
- Stated in the state of Georgia by law if you miss an election the people whose terms were up, the people could hold that seat until someone else is legally and rightfully elected for that seat. Stated if the council wanted to.
- Said there was as discussion about doing a special election. The only way we can hold a special election is if there is a vacant seat. Named some of the ways the seats could be vacant.
- There is going to be an election in March.
- We need the two people to resign from those seats, and then if they wanted to run for the seats again, they may do so.
- Gave an example of another city that went through the same situation with the elections.
- Asked the council did they know when their terms ended.
- True citizen Smitley asked even though the elections are being held in March when will the next term be.
- Attorney Doug Kidd answered in 4 years from November 2023.
- Mr. Neely stated he thinks the city should hold a special election.
- Attorney Doug Kidd said that he would go down to the Board of Elections and see what he could find in their books.
- Asked Smitley did she ask about LaTora Lewis being Certified Election Clerk? Smitley responded back the Board of Elections said they did not have a record of Keysville having an Election Clerk.
- Asked that the city reimburse the True Citizen \$96.00.

- Mayor Wilkes stated Ms. Smithley had the opportunity to look over the information before she paid. She used the information to sell the article and now she wants a refund. Stated she responded to the letter from the DA office and sent a letter to Mr. Chalker, Ms. Smithley's boss.
- Mr. Kidd stated he could not make her pay.

Announcements/Comments from the floor:

James Neely

- Concerned citizens will have a turkey give away at 12noon at Hardens store.
- Christmas Dinner December 15.
- Thanked everyone for their support for the Medicare and Medicaid meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

Mayor Linda Wilkes asked to make a motion to have the meeting adjourned.

Council Woman Kathy Couch made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VM Sharon Neely seconded the motion.

Mayor Linda Wilkes adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned.