



Town council meeting June 2, 2025

Present: Mayor Chris Lelle; Councilmen, Tommy Buchanan, Sharon Johnson, Eric Dailey, Doug Koestel and Sally Brown, Clerk, Kathy Bridges, Attorney, Jack Samuels,

Visitors: Beth Buchanan; Scott Morgan, Amber Wigley, Attorney, Summer Wren

The meeting opened at 7:00 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for a motion to approve the May 5 meeting minutes. Sally Brown made the motion to approve, Sharon Johnson seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Mayor asked to amend the agenda for two items: a home business license for Lynhurst Market; and an update on the passport training. Sally Brown made the motion to add the items to the agenda, Eric Dailey seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

In new business, Mayor Lelle said he was meeting with the CPL engineer this week to discuss the estimate for road work bid preparation.

Item two was credit card processing through GovCard. Lelle said there was no 30-day out clause but there were no charges beyond the set-up fee. Doug Koestel made the motion to approve using GovCard, Sally Brown seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The welcome sign quotes were next on the agenda. The council agreed on: the two big signs (63x48 with brick pedestal) for \$7100; the 4 signs for the main roads into town (48x36 with pressure treated posts) for \$3160; and 6 smaller signs (36x24 with pressure treated posts) for \$2370 for a total of \$12,630. The six bigger signs would have stars above the sign and the smaller signs would just say "Welcome to Bethlehem" with the logo in the middle. Doug Koestel made a motion to move forward on the signs, Eric Dailey seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous vote.

Code enforcement procedures were discussed next. Attorney Jack Samuels had drafted a policy stating that complaints would go first to the Mayor who would present them to the council for action before getting the code enforcement officer involved. A code enforcement cost sheet was also presented, and the Mayor said the supplies had been ordered. Samuels was to rewrite the policy for the June 30 work session.

The next item was the request of I9Sports to use the field adjacent to the playground for their sports clinic sessions. The clerk explained that the area developer for I9Sports, Janet Williams,

made the request to use the field for 3 hours one or two days a week for six -week sessions. She said it would likely be flag football, soccer and baseball. The council authorized Mayor Pro-Tem, Eric Dailey, to work out terms of an agreement with a motion by Sally Brown, a second by Doug Koestel and a unanimous vote.

The International Building Code and property maintenance standards policy was next discussed. Attorney Samuels said the town's codes were outdated and the town needed to adopt a policy using state standards in order for code enforcement to reference when a citizen was breaking a code. He recommended the town adopt into its ordinances by reference the most current versions of all minimum state codes (1) as adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as well as (2) the current property maintenance code. Sharon Johnson made a motion to accept the (1) minimum state codes but revisit the property maintenance code at the work session after review. Sally Brown seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed.

The council discussed a vape shop policy. Attorney Samuels suggested limiting vape shops to a single zoning classification with a special use permit required. Eric Dailey made the motion for the attorney to draft such a policy, Sharon Johnson seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous vote.

Amber Wigley, the director of kids' ministry at Bethlehem First United Methodist Church, addressed the council about the town hosting a summer water event for children in the park. She said the church would finance several water activities like a water slide and offer food and drinks. They would just need water and electricity. She said the date would be Sunday, June 29 from 5 – 7 p.m. Sally Brown made the motion to allow the event, Eric Dailey seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Music on the square was next on the agenda. The Mayor was in favor of using the event planners for 3 events this summer with a maximum budget of \$5,000. The planners provide music and booths by sponsorships. Sharon Johnson made the motion to proceed, Sally Brown seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The home business license for Jaclyn Hurst was up next on the agenda. Lynhurst Market LLC was a resell vintage online business. Sally Brown made the motion to approve the license, Doug Koestel seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous vote.

Sally Brown reported that delegates from the state department were planning a training session for the Bethlehem passport facility on July 10 from 9-5. She and the clerk were to be trained and anyone from Statham Library (also a passport facility) and the Bethlehem Post Office were welcome to attend.

Lastly the council reviewed the financial documents. A work session was scheduled for June 30. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.