

MINUTES
CITY OF MCDONOUGH
ORGANIZATIONAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL – JANUARY 4, 2016
6:00 p.m.

The Organizational Meeting of the City of McDonough City Council was held on Monday, January 4, 2016, at 6:00 p.m., with the following members present:

Mayor:	Billy Copeland
Councilmembers:	Craig Elrod
	Benjamin Pruett
	Roger Pruitt
	Rufus Stewart
	Kam Varner
	Sandra Vincent

(Councilmember Sandra Vincent arrived shortly after the meeting began).

Others in attendance were: City Administrator, Mr. Keith Dickerson; City Attorney, Ms. Leigh Hancher; City Clerk, Ms. Janis Price; Police Chief, Mr. Preston Dorsey; Fire Chief, Mr. Steve Morgan; Finance Director, Mr. Mike Clark; Business Development Director, Mr. Bob Trescott; Community Development Director, Mr. Rodney Heard; and Public Works Director, Mr. Ronnie Thompson.

Mayor Copeland called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Councilmember Craig Elrod led the Pledge to the Flag, and the Reverend Chris Anderson, Pastor of Retro Church gave the Invocation.

Mayor Copeland called for a motion to approve the Agenda with the amendment to postpone Item 10, until the January 19th meeting. Councilmember Stewart motioned to approve with the above amendment and Councilmember Elrod seconded. The vote was five in favor. Those voting in favor were: Mayor Copeland and Councilmembers Elrod, Pruitt, Stewart and Varner. (Councilmember Vincent was not present for the vote.)

Mayor Copeland introduced State Court Judge, The Honorable Jason Harper, to perform performing the swearing-in ceremony for newly elected councilmembers Craig Elrod, District 3; Kam Varner, District 4; and Benjamin Pruett, Councilmember At Large.

Judge Harper remarked about the importance of public service and shared a quote from Teddy Roosevelt, which was provided to him by Ms. Dana Lemon. He then called upon Councilmember Craig Elrod to come forward, and he administered the oath of office. Secondly, Councilperson Kam Varner came forward and took the oath; and finally, Mr. Benjamin Pruett came to the podium and was sworn in, as well.

Councilmember Elrod then offered gratitude to his family and friends for their support. He also expressed appreciation for his fellow councilmembers, and welcomed Mr. Benjamin Pruett to the City Council.

Councilmember Varner thanked her family for their continued support. She said that she is thankful to be a lifetime resident of McDonough, and conveyed gratitude to her constituents on her re-election. She expressed appreciation to the McDonough Youth Advisory Council, and said she looks forward to the next four years. She also welcomed Mr. Benjamin Pruett to the City Council, and acknowledged each of her fellow councilmembers.

Councilmember Benjamin Pruett offered his appreciation to his family for their support, and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve the citizens of McDonough. He addressed Mayor and Council, stating that he looks forward to serving alongside each to keep McDonough moving forward with serving hearts.

Mayor Copeland then called for nominations for Mayor Pro Tem, for 2016. Councilmember Stewart nominated Ms. Kam Varner to serve as Mayor Pro Tem, and Councilmember Varner seconded.

Councilmember Elrod then nominated Mr. Roger Pruitt for Mayor Pro Tem, and Councilmember Pruett seconded.

Mayor Copeland then closed the nominations, and called for a vote in support of electing Councilperson Roger Pruitt as Mayor Pro Tem. He then called for a vote in support of electing Councilperson Kam Varner as Mayor Pro Tem.

The voting results were four in favor of electing Roger Pruitt as Mayor Pro Tem; and there were three in favor of electing Councilmember Varner. Mayor Copeland, Councilmember Elrod, Councilmember Pruitt, and Councilmember Pruett voted in favor of Councilmember Pruitt; and Councilmembers Stewart, Varner and Vincent voted in favor of Councilmember Varner. The vote resulted in the election of Councilmember Roger Pruitt to serve as Mayor Pro Tem for 2016.

Mayor Copeland then offered congratulations to Councilmember Pruitt.

Councilmember Vincent raised two concerns that regarding the rotation cycle for the Mayor Pro Tem annual election, it was Councilmember Varner's term to serve.

The second thing is that Councilmember Pruitt was appointed as the Chair of the Urban Redevelopment Agency, and she thought that why the Mayor did not serve in that capacity is because we were trying to maintain some type of arms-length statute within the nomination. So, by Councilperson Pruitt being appointed as the Chair of the Urban Redevelopment Agency and also being selected as Mayor Pro Tem, do we not enter into some form of conflict by virtue of the practice of the precedents that is being established

The City Attorney, Ms. Hancher remarked that the Charter required that the Mayor Pro Tem be elected by the majority of Mayor and Council and that is what just happened. And that this election of the Mayor Pro Tem is for one year.

Councilmember Vincent wasn't referring to the Charter but there had been a practice of rotating the Mayor Pro Tem position through the councilmembers.

Mayor Copeland commented that he based his decision on longevity, and Mr. Pruitt has been here four years and he thought that had merit, and he made his decision on that; and the vote has been cast. So, are there any other comments anyone had?

Councilmember Elrod said he wasn't aware of any type rotation method for the Mayor Pro Tem position. He felt that the At- Large position was a good choice because there's only three people councilmembers in the whole city that all of the voters have had a chance to cast a vote on, and that was the two At- Large seats and the Mayor's seat. So, Councilmember Elrod thought Mayor Pro Tem should be what's going to fit the city best.

Councilmember Vincent commented that it just appears that the governing body made the rules up as we did, and we justified our decisions based on whatever is convenient for us; but Council was talking about the practices that this Mayor and Council, this body has set forth as an organization. Councilperson Varner sat there in silence, Councilmember Vincent thought it was a travesty to overlook her for two years based on longevity.

Councilmember Pruitt remarked that it was an honor to be selected, and he would work with all members. And he planned to serve all of the citizens of McDonough, and will make every effort at all times to attend all meetings and to be on time, even the ribbon-cutting ceremonies. Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt looked forward to working with all so we can work together to serve McDonough and meet the needs of the community.

Councilmember Stewart commented that he was the longest serving City Councilmember, and he wanted to state for the record that he was aware of the rotation for Mayor Pro Tem.

Mayor Copeland then reviewed the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- A. Adoption of a Resolution approving the appointment of Members (Ben Pruett, Craig Elrod, Kam Varner) to the Board of Commissioners for the Urban Redevelopment Agency for The City of McDonough and each of their terms will expire on December 31, 2019.
- B. Approval of a 48 month equipment lease with Mail Finance for folder inserter equipment. (First 12 payments will be \$659.00, and the remaining 36 payments payment will be \$894.00). This is an approved expenditure in the FY 2016 budget; authorization for the Mayor to sign the contract.
- C. Approval of a contract modification with Pond & Company to allow for a fee increase of \$23,000.00 to increase the total contract price to \$142,960.00 for the completion of the McDonough Unified Development

Code Revision. This increase will be paid from Professional Services in the Community Development Budget; authorization for the Mayor to sign the agreement.

- D. Approval of preliminary plat for Kensington Park (f.k.a. Callaway Park) in accord with City Code Section 16.12.060-Referral of Preliminary Review.

Mayor Copeland asked for comments or questions from Council regarding the items on the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Vincent requested that the City Attorney describe the URA and the boundaries it covers, for citizens in the audience. Ms. Hancher offered detailed information regarding the URA and its authority; however, she did not have the information relative to its boundaries at the meeting. She offered to gather that information and present it at a later time.

Business Development Director, Mr. Bob Trescott was in attendance for the meeting, and he offered the approximate boundaries for the URA, as being roughly from Alexander Park on the north side of the City, to Zack Hinton Parkway on the east and the south; and then along the railroad tracks over to Doris and Bridges Road; and then back to the railroad tracks at Alexander Park. Councilmember Vincent then pointed out that the URA covers Old Griffin Road, as well as many areas that are historically African-American communities within the City, and stressed the importance of informing those residents of legislation that could impact them, relative to their properties.

Mayor Copeland then called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilperson Stewart motioned to approve and Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt seconded. The vote was seven in favor.

Mayor Copeland offered his compliments and appreciation for the success of 2015 City of McDonough Christmas Parade, and praised the participants for their creativity. He welcomed Pastor Chris Anderson, along with members of Retro Church, and presented them with a check as the first-place winners of the 2015 parade. Next Mayor Copeland invited Ms. Carol Kelly to come forward on behalf of second-place winners, the Paw Pad, and also presented her with a check.

Dr. Grier's presentation was postponed to the January 19th, meeting.

Previously Mayor Copeland had presented a Proclamation in recognition of Mrs. Tommie Lillian Glover's 100th birthday. Mayor Copeland called for a motion to make this Proclamation a part of the minutes. Councilmember Stewart motioned, and Councilmember Elrod seconded. The vote was seven in favor.

Finance Director, Mr. Mike Clark came forward to present an update on revenues and expenditures of the General Fund, SPLOST Project Fund, and Hotel/Motel Tax Fund, as of November 30, 2015.

- General Fund revenues are \$7,282,295.
- Total expenditures for the General Fund are \$4,620,756.
- SPLOST III collected \$183, in interest; and SPLOST IV collected \$6,782.

- SPLOST III expenditures total \$209,522; and SPLOST IV expenditures total \$720,633.
- Hotel/Motel Tax revenues are \$460,291, which is a 19.22% increase over last year.

Councilmember Vincent expressed appreciation to Mr. Clark on the level of work that he puts into his job; and thanked Mr. Dickerson for choosing Mr. Clark as the Finance Director for the City.

The following were recommendations by Mayor and Council to the Planning Commission (PC), Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA) and to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):

	Planning Commission	Board of Zoning Appeals	Historic Preservation Commission
Mayor Copeland	Terri O'Quinn	----	----
CM Rufus Stewart	Eddie Elliott	Rufus Amis	Jean Bell
CM Sandra Vincent	Yolanda Williams	Sam Humphrey	Jerry Hayes
CM Craig Elrod	----	Rosa Mary O'Toole	----
CM Kam Varner	Stanley Head	Stefany Mosely	Gail Notti
CM Roger Pruitt	Don Pope	Kay Shipley	Ronnie Colvin
CM Benjamin Pruett	Thor Wiggins	Troy Hitt	Lindsay Strickland

Mayor Copeland asked for a motion to approve the above appointments to the specified committees effective January 1, 2016. Councilmember Pruitt motioned to approve the appointments, and Councilmember Stewart seconded. The vote was seven in favor.

There were no unscheduled public comments.

Mr. Rodney Heard noted to Mayor and Council that Mr. Dan Green, who is the engineer on record for Kensington Park (formerly Callaway Park), was in attendance for the meeting. Councilmember Vincent publicly acknowledged her appreciation for Mr. Green and his willingness to work with the City and Council, to improve the plans for the Kensington Park property. She stated that although the vote to purchase adjacent property to Kensington Park was set aside by Council, she would continue to work with the citizens of Overlook in trying to stabilize that area.

There was no Executive Session.

City Administrator, Mr. Keith Dickerson thanked all of the City's staff who worked overtime hours through the inclement weather to make the Geranium Drop successful. He commended the employees of the water plant for their efforts to keep the infrastructure going.

City Attorney, Ms. Leigh Hancher offered her congratulations to the newly re-elected councilmembers, and welcomed Councilmember Benjamin Pruett to the Council, and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

City Clerk, Ms. Janis Price asked Councilmembers to update their contact information to be shared with the public. She also gave each Councilmember an audit pack and asked that they review it and bring it for the January 19th City Council Meeting.

Ms. Price also asked for Council to make a decision regarding the McDonough Governmental Finance Corporation annual meeting. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the retreat.

Councilmember Vincent stated that she would be unable to attend the retreat on January 29th, due to a conflict in her work schedule; and further asked if the date could be rescheduled. Mayor Copeland noted that the dates for the retreat were scheduled 12 months in advance with a facilitator, but that he would have the City Clerk call to see if the facilitator could change the date.

Councilmember Elrod thanked the City Staff for their hard work though the holiday season, and commented on the success of the Geranium Drop. He commented that it's great to have a full house for council meetings and hopes that everyone will return for future meetings.

Councilmember Varner encouraged the audience to stay abreast of City business and continue to be involved in the meetings. She invited citizens to come out and enjoy the square and events of the City. She offered her appreciation to staff for their continued hard work, and said that she looks forward to working together with everyone on the Council to accomplish some great things.

Councilmember Benjamin Pruett said that he is thankful for the opportunity to serve. He stated that he will continue reaching out to his fellow councilmembers and to department heads in an effort to have a better understanding of their challenges.

Councilmember Vincent offered her appreciation to Mr. Dickerson and the City Staff for their hard work during rainy/flood season. She welcomed the returning members of the Council, as well as Councilmember Benjamin Pruett. She said that she looks forward to working with each of them, and stressed the importance of collaboration in bridging the gap and addressing the unique challenges of District 2. She closed by saying that she will continue to pray with an open heart that the Council will be able to work together, in one accord.

Councilmember Stewart reiterated the gratitude of his fellow council members and said he is happy for the beginning of New Year. He also said that he is thankful to see the involvement of young people in local government, and encouraged those in attendance to continue their involvement. He also commented on the continued efforts for improvements on Phillips Drive, and said he will continue to work hard to bring those improvements about.

Mayor Pro Tem Roger Pruitt also thanked the City Administrator and staff, to include volunteers, for their hard work during the recent bad weather. He commended Councilmembers Elrod and Varner on their re-elections, and welcomed Councilmember Pruett to the Council.

Mayor Copeland wished everyone a Happy New Year. He recognized Mr. Eugene Edwards, with the NAACP, along with his wife and thanked them for attending the meeting.

Mayor Copeland commended the Tourism Department on the success of the 2015 Geranium Drop, and recognized the impact that their continued efforts have made to the economy of the City.

Mayor Copeland also recognized former Councilmember Mike Elrod, who was in attendance for the meeting. Mr. Elrod spoke briefly about the pride he feels in seeing his own son serve on the City Council, as he did years ago.

Mayor Copeland also said that Captain D's and Dairy Queen Restaurants will be coming to McDonough, at the corner of Postmaster Drive and Highway 81. He also commented on the new Taco Bell restaurant that has recently opened, and expressed excitement over the continued growth of the City.

In closing, Councilmember Stewart asked that all members of the Council stand and join hands, in a sign of unity and teamwork.

Mayor Copeland then called for a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Elrod motioned, and Councilmember Rufus seconded. All stood favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Janis E. Price
City Clerk

OPEN MEETINGS COMPLIANCE NOTICE: This is a regularly scheduled meeting of Mayor and Council of the City of McDonough duly noticed pursuant to the requirements of the Georgia Open Meetings Law (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1, et seq). Notice of the meeting was published in the Henry Daily Herald on December 30, 2015; and a copy of the meeting schedule is posted at City Hall and on the City's website, as required by law.