

City of Maxeys Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Call to order – 7pm

Minutes taken by Jenny Yearwood

Present

Edward Toledano, Mayor

Danny Gorman, Mayor Pro-Tem and Council Member

Shirley Callahan, Council Member

Carrie Hyatt, Council Member

Carrie Hayes, Council Member

Doug Miller, Council Member

Jenny Yearwood-Parker, City Clerk

Guests

Chris Baskin, Linda Bulloch, Bo Bulloch, Barbara Cabaniss, Jesse Carter, Teresa Churchwell, Ian Dieball, Anne Garner, Warren Gilson, Jennie Miller, Justin Sanders, John Stephens, Ethan Thaxton

All items below are recorded from Agenda

- (Item 1) Call to Order was done by Edward Toledano at 7:02 pm; Invocation was said by Shirley Callahan; All attending – Pledge of Allegiance
- (Item 2) Adoption of Agenda & Prior Months Meeting Minutes –
 - Shirley Callahan made a motion to accept agenda and minutes, and Danny Gorman second; motion passed
- (Item 3) Announcement of next meeting date of April 8, 2025
- (Item 4) Citizen Input –
 - Teresa Churchwell- thanked the council for having the best building application fees but expressed concern for the potential cost of new water software. Instead, she wants to make sure the updates for the Community Center are taken care of within the budget.
 - Barbara Cabaniss- offered to plant a Christmas tree on behalf of the Maxeys Woman's Club; Council asked for this to be postponed until the next meeting where we could discuss where and when the tree would be planted.
 - Warren Gilson- Expressed concerns over the GDOT about to make improvements where Cherry Street comes into Highway 77. The GDOT plans to remove dirt. Mr. Gilson suggested that we move the dirt ourselves where we could fill in the pot holes located in the parking lot at the City Hall. There were questions to Mr. Gilson as to who ordered this work to be done and it was agreed that Mayor Toledano would follow up with the GDOT personnel.
 - Ian Dieball- Represented the Salem Volunteer Fire Department. He requested the following:
 - Permission to use the Maxeys Fire Hall (which they serve out of) for a fundraiser planned for April 29.
 - Requested that if the city had events in the Fire Hall that the truck area be roped off whereby there was no tampering with any of the fire trucks
 - His team has corrected the electrical brakers and the lights in the Fire Hall.
 - Justin Sanders, Chief of the Salem Volunteer Fire Department, requested that all communications with the City of Maxeys be done through Danny Gorman. Many Council members spoke to how appreciative the community is for the Salem Volunteer Fire Department to be housed and operated out of the City's Fire Hall. Councilman Gorman suggested that the Salem Volunteer Fire Department always have access to the Fire Hall. Chief Sanders reported they responded to 51 calls last year and this year they responded to 16. Their trucks are in great shape. Councilwoman Callahan asked if they had finalized their annual calendar events for fundraisers. They have no definite dates outside of April 26 for an egg and ham event. It was agreed they could use the space. The Council and Mayor asked to be informed of any events to avoid scheduling conflicts.
- (Item 5) City Communication updates – US Treasury Department Non-Compliance Notice, Georgia Dept of Natural Resources letter requiring additional Monitoring & Notice of violation from 2024, GDOT – Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) Not Eligible to apply because we are not a Qualified Local Government
 - US Treasury item is a major issue. The city was supposed to provide a report of funding allocations by the end of 2024. If reporting was not submitted, the city must return the unused funds. There is very little

documentation of what funds were used for specific items. Working on getting into US Treasury Portal to determine what was reported by prior administration. There was discussion among the council members as to if and when the reports were completed and submitted. There was input from Warren Gilson and Teresa Churchwell when members of the council asked them questions regarding the reporting process. Mayor Toledano stated that he was in the process of working to get into the Federal Government portal to check the status of these reports, and see what else is needed to avoid repayment of unused funds.

- Georgia Dept of Natural Resources letter requiring additional Monitoring & Notice of violation from 2024, Mayor Toledano is working with Adam Boswell to make sure we are in compliant with the DNR for our water samples. There was some discussion of the process for the test in the past from the council members.
- GDOT – Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG), however we are not eligible to apply until we correct our annual financial reviews. We will be caught up on these reviews by the end of 2026.
- (Item 6) Permit Applications – There was no discussion
- (Item 7) Consent Agenda – Upgrade software systems Word & Quicken
 - MS Word is \$150 while QuickBooks is \$65/month. The decision was made to postpone this purchase until Council members, Carrie Hayes and Carrie Hyatt could get together with the City Clerk to discuss the needs in more detail. They plan to meet together before next month's meeting.
- (Item 8) Meetings report from Mayor
 - Todd Hammond (Dairy Cross over) waiting on quote to repair
 - David Gabriel (City Needs) – the city is responsible for the upkeep and adjustments to digital speed signs. He will get us access keys; city speed limit signs, add them after stop signs to be seen as you turn onto road, requested weekly patrols on alternating days to be consistent, discussed that we are now a historic district and fines are to be tripled – referred to Captain Todd Tetteron who is captain of the roads for these last two.
 - Dennis Helmich (City Attorney) – discussed how to work together.
 - Brock Tyson & Karon Lester & Don Ord (GDOT) – received the permit guidelines for the historic signs, requested drainage area by City Hall and first crossover be addressed and overhanging trees on Hwy 77
 - Marc Beatty (NEGRG) regarding our non-compliance for QLG and confirmed we cannot get ANY grants. He asked how long it will take us to get back into compliance {End of 2026 at a cost of \$24,000} • Jeh Sharp – Permitting noted above
 - Attended the Oglethorpe County Commissioners meeting – Need a council member to commit to attend the April 7th meeting please, 6 pm.
 - Lynn Shedd – regarding hydrant install
 - Adam Boswell – regarding the tank washout and Well tap
 - Seavy Oneal – Mayor of Crawford – intro meeting and quarterly visits with other 2 Mayors
 - Charlie Roberts CSR Construction & Rafael Velasquez – Quotes for City Hall & Community Center work
- (Item 9) Housing Ordinance
 - There has been inquiry as to installing mobile homes on Willow Street.
 - There was discussion of the current ordinance. There was input to the county regulations and the improbability of getting a mobile home actually down Willow Street.
- (item 10) Committee Reports
 - City Finance Report for February – All Bank accounts have been reconciled
 - CD Due on 4.27.25 – Rolled over at 3.9200% - confirmation attached
 - Billing notices– Need a motion to go to all electronic statements going forward this would include any bill that would give us an electronic statement, i.e., Georgia Power, Tri County Natural Gas, and Windstream. Carrie Hayes made a motion to approve all bills/invoices/statements to be electronic; Carrie Hyatt second; All were in favor.
 - Consolidate Financial Services – There was discussion as to moving all of our funds to Commercial Bank. There was concern over the FDIC insurance being that of \$250,000. Both Mayor Toledano and Carrie Hyatt agreed to research this and report back to the Council Members at next month's meeting.
 - City Clerk access to Financial Institutions
 - Ms. Yearwood-Parker needs online access to manage our bank account with certain permissions. Council member Hyatt explained that we are trying to get a business platform with our banking institution so that Ms. Yearwood-Parker can have her own login. This will be determined at a later date when the Council decides if we move to ONE bank for our needs.
 - Insurance

There needs to be a full review of all our insurance coverages as Steve Bray is retiring from the business and there has not done a review in some time. Doug Miller agreed to meet with Mr. Bray regarding the City's insurance needs.

- Parks & Recreation

- Community Center

Mayor Toledano reported to the Council the quotes he had received to complete updates to the Community Center. This was postponed due to concern with the City's finances and will be revisited at next month's meeting.

- Large Tree by the well house; It was agreed for the Mayor to get a quote to have it removed

- Playground upgrade

Carrie Hayes and Carrie Hyatt agreed to review the status of the playground and will begin to develop a plan to re-do and or replace items and clear up the area.

- Dead Tree at the Peace Garden

Doug Miller suggested we do this ourselves; all council members agreed.

- Firefly Trail

- Design & Engineering phase approved \$800k for Crawford, Shady Dale, Maxeys and Maxeys to Greene County Gap, Ticket to Ride March 22

- Maxeys 5K Report

Anne Garner reported that things are moving along and she was hoping to pick up a few more sponsorships. Their next meeting is March 17.

- Veterans Park

Flags have been changed out

- Rotary Club Peace Garden

The garden has been cleaned up. The City has earmarked \$1700 toward the Garden and the Rotary has \$1200 committed. The Mayor will ask Adam Boswell to give us a quote to get water access to the garden.

- Utilities

- 811 DIG

Since Adam Boswell gets the notices anyway, the Council did not think there was a reason for us to join the 811 Dig at \$250 a year

- Delinquent Water Accounts

Mayor Toledano had a list of past due accounts and there was discussion as to how we should handle these accounts. Questions were regarding our current policy. It was agreed that these individuals should receive a letter from the City next week stating a payment plan option whereby they could catch up. If we do not hear from the customer by a certain deadline, their water will be turned off. The Mayor and the Clerk agreed to work on this next week. If there are any current bills where the rental tenant has left Maxeys, it was agreed that before the service could be turned back on, the bill had to be paid by the property owner. It was stressed that this has been the City's policy, no exceptions. Councilwoman Hayes requested a copy of our current policy to post on the City's website.

- Water rate evaluation needed

Councilman Gorman suggested we determine how many gallons get used a year and research all expenses and income before we raise rates. It was agreed that the Clerk would get those numbers to the Council by next month's meeting.

- Water System

- Old pump needs to be capped and repaired. Adam Boswell estimates the cost of \$300. Doug Miller made motion for this to be repaired; Danny Gorman second; All agreed.

- Water Tank Clean Process

- There was discussion as to how this would be completed. Doug Miller made a motion for this work to be completed; Shirley Callahan second; All agreed.

- New Utility Software Needed

- New software would allow for online payment, automatic payment, prepayment, portal set up to view account online, bill alert and notification via email and text. Also has a tablet option to collect meter readings and upload directly to software. There was discussion regarding the postage cost of mailing the water bills. The software engineers have extended the quote to May 31 for us to make a decision on

moving to this new system. This was postponed until we have more information as to what the water system is costing us per gallon to make sure any increase in rate would cover the new software cost.

- Public Works & Infrastructure
 - City Hall and Community Center Cleaning Service- Postponed until next meeting.
 - Fire Department has been asked to clean up firehall-Completed at the end of February.
 - Fire Hall Doors & Wall consideration & Community Center (phased approach) repair estimates- postponed until the next meeting.
 - City Hall work -Toilets replaced ASAP, leaking men's room
 - Councilman Miller and the Mayor agreed to change out the wax seal in the two restrooms at the City Hall this weekend.
- Administration
 - Maxeys Building Approval Process

Maxeys DOES NOT issue building permits, since the city does not have its own building inspector. The City can have an application process where we tell the county that the application has or has not been approved. The website needs to be updated to explain a new process and remove all rates. This was postponed until we have the verbiage for the website completed, and we will discuss at our next month's meeting. Councilwoman Hayes will reach out to other cities to get an example of the letter issued and verbiage.
 - No Engine Brake estimates postponed until next meeting.
 - Post Office

Mayor reported that he met with the Postmistress in Lexington/Crawford, Ms. Audra. Many Post Offices are open 24/7. Motion made by Carrie Hayes for our Post Office to be open 24/7; Carrie Hyatt second; All agreed.
 - Spectrum Internet & Phone

There is no cost savings by switching to Spectrum, so the City will stay with Windstream for their internet needs.
 - Spectrum Franchise fee

The mayor asked Spectrum about paying their franchise fees to the City. The company said they would check on this and get back with us.
 - Annual Community Calendar

Has been posted to the website
 - Community Wide Text Message System

Instead, Councilwoman Hayes is working on a MailChimp email system.
- (Item 11) Old Business
 - Hydrant install is going to happen within the next month.
- (Item 12) New Business
 - Councilwomen Hayes and Hyatt, along with the mayor are going to the Newly Elected Officials Training (March 19-21) in Tifton which is mandatory. They did receive scholarships for the training and are asking the city to cover the cost of the hotel bill of \$700. Doug Miller made a motion for the city to cover \$400 of the cost of the hotel; Shirley Callahan second; All agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm