

CITY OF STATHAM

AGENDA

Statham City Hall

327 Jefferson Street, Statham, GA 30666



WORK SESSION – July 7, 2022

6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Piper called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Councilmembers Krause, Patterson, Penn, Thrasher

Absent: Councilmember Venable

Also present: City Accountant April Stephens and City Attorney Jody Campbell.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Mayor Piper led the Pledge of Allegiance and thanked all veterans and their families.

REPORTS

City Accountant April Stephens provided the finance report. She indicated that fiscal year 2022 was officially closed, and the new fiscal year 2023 budget was in place. She provided an update to the FY21 audit status, and stated they were looking into new finance software.

Mayor Piper went through the police department report and public works department report briefly. Captain Nichols, in attendance, provided an update to Sgt. Russo's upcoming graduation of the K9 academy. She also stated the City's new K9 dog's name is Nora and is a no-bite dog but a tracking dog. All reports were provided to the council.

1. Finance Department
2. Police Department
3. Public Works Department

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1. Axon Enterprise Agreement:** To approve the Mayor to sign an updated agreement with Axon Enterprises, Inc. for Police Department body cameras for 60 months beginning August 1, 2022 and ending July 31, 2027. The cost is a maximum of \$10,076.50 per year, per the agreement.

No discussion on the Axon Enterprise Agreement. City Accountant April Stephens noted they were still in negotiations with Axon regarding the extended warranty and the "refreshes" they offer for their equipment. She stated at the maximum, the annual agreement would be \$10,076.50 per year with hopes to lower that amount based on the outcome of the negotiations.

- 2. City of Statham Personnel Policy Change – Leave Type:** To approve a change to the City's Employee Benefits – Leave Type in the Personnel Policy Handbook on pages 74 – 78 and implement a new Paid Time Off (PTO) accrual system and cancel the current vacation time and sick time policy. This new policy will go into effect January 1, 2023. To minimize any

conversion loss from the former sick and vacation policy to this PTO policy, employees whose converted PTO balances are in excess of their new longevity cap on the effective date of this policy will be able to retain the excess amount and “use down” this excess through December 31, 2022. On January 1, 2024, all excess sick time will be forfeited, and all excess vacation time will be paid to the employee. Should an employee terminate their employment for any reason prior to January 1, 2024, all excess time excluding vacation time will be forfeited.

City Accountant April Stephens briefed council on this personnel policy change. Councilmember Thrasher inquired about vacation and if any of that would be forfeited. April Stephens stated no, an employee will not lose any vacation time accumulated. Councilmember Krause inquired on the sick time accumulated that employee’s did not use. April stated the new policy would provide an incentive to those staff members who do not use much sick time and that the new policy allows those employees to roll over a portion of unused sick time to PTO time.

- 3. City of Statham Personnel Policy Change – Pay Period:** To approve a change to the City’s Pay System in the Personnel Policy Handbook on pages 66 – 69 and implement a new pay period for all City employees to be paid on a bi-weekly basis. Payroll checks will be processed on Wednesday. When a pay date falls on an official City holiday, employees will be paid on the day after the holiday. This new policy will go into effect January 9, 2023.

Councilmember Thrasher asked if employees know about this change yet, and April Stephens stated many employees do know, and reiterated this pay change will not take place for six months, so lots of time will be given to employees before it goes into effect. Councilmember Patterson asked if this change could be postponed until after the holiday season, and April Stephens said yes. Councilmember Krause stated she would like to see a copy of the Personnel Policy, and April Stephens stated it had been emailed to the entire council the week prior along with the agenda packet. It was then discussed that this policy change wouldn’t go into effect until January 9, 2023 making the first city-wide bi-weekly pay Wednesday, January 25, 2022.

- 4. City of Statham Personnel Policy Change – Bereavement Leave:** To approve a change to the City’s Bereavement Leave policy in the Personnel Policy Handbook on page 78. The new policy states full-time employees shall be eligible for bereavement leave after ninety (90) days of employment. Bereavement leave of up to three (3) consecutive working days shall be granted to an employee in the event of a death in the immediate family. A total of three (3) days of paid bereavement leave shall be granted per calendar year. This leave will be paid at the regular employee rate and will not count towards overtime. Bereavement hours that exceed three (3) days are unpaid unless PTO is used by the employee. There is no accumulation of bereavement leave and no payment upon separation from City employment.

City Attorney Jody Campbell went over this change and stated it clarifies what he believed was the original intent of the policy. He stated employees may take as many bereavement events as needed per calendar year, however, the City will only pay for up to three (3) days per calendar year. If more than three days of bereavement are taken, the employee can use PTO or unpaid status.

5. **City of Statham Personnel Policy Change – Holidays:** To approve a change to the City’s observance of holidays in the Personnel Policy Handbook on page 81 and implement a new policy for holidays. The new policy states When a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will typically be observed on the following Monday. Holidays that fall on a Saturday will typically be observed the preceding Friday. Holiday schedules may be altered by City Council. *When Christmas Eve naturally falls on a Sunday, the holiday may be observed the Tuesday following a Monday Christmas Day or as approved by City Council. Floating Holiday is granted to each City employee each calendar year. Floating Holiday must be used as a single 8-hour day and hours may not be divided between different days. A Floating Holiday must be used in the calendar year in which it was received and will not be rolled over into the following year. Floating Holidays are not paid upon separation from the City. This policy will go into effect January 1, 2023.

April Stephens stated this update was to clarify the holiday schedule, and allows council to vote on days off each year when the annual calendar is voted for each year, particularly during the Christmas holiday or other holidays that may fall on a day that causes question when to take off. Councilmember Krause asked if city hall is closed each holiday, and April Stephens said yes.

6. **Barrow County Water Purchase Contract Proposal:** To discuss a wholesale water purchase agreement.

Mayor Piper discussed the contract proposal. He stated this proposal is a 10-year agreement with no out. His concerns is if the City moves towards water independence, the City will still be locked in at purchasing 150,000 gpd from the County whether we use the water or not. He stated he would prefer a five-year agreement. City Attorney Jody Campbell stated this is a “take or pay” agreement. Councilmember Patterson inquired on the maximum amount of water purchase currently, and Mayor Piper stated there is not maximum currently. Councilmembers Penn and Krause agree that a 10-year agreement is too long and want to negotiate those terms. Councilmember Penn also would like to negotiate the cap of water purchase, which needs to be higher in the proposed agreement.

7. **TSPLOST (Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax):** To discuss a TSPLOST referendum.

Mayor Piper has been in discussions with other local municipalities about TSPLOST. The agreement would have to be agreed upon between Winder and the County and the remaining municipalities go along for the ride. It was indicated that Winder proposed other options and was shot down by the County with no suggestions, however, plans are still to move forward with those negotiations. City Attorney Jody Campbell stated that TSPLOST funds are required to specified projects. Councilmembers Krause and Penn both agree with a TSPLOST referendum. Councilmember Penn inquired on the timing of a referendum and if it could be on this year’s ballot. Mayor Piper stated only if the County agrees.

8. **LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) Negotiations:** To discuss LOST negotiations.

Mayor Piper stated he has been involved in the upcoming LOST negotiations, and that LOST is based on population. He noted that Winder is still negotiating with the County, and that Statham will need to decide to go along with the agreement.

CITIZEN INPUT

Mary Lay – gave input on a traffic ticket received by her daughter.

Tim Terilli – gave input on traffic calming devices and signs.

MINUTE APPROVAL

1. June 21, 2022 Regular Meeting (submitted to Council on June 23, 2022)

Councilmember Krause made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2022 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Penn seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-1 with Thrasher voting no.

ADJOURN

At 7:57 p.m., Councilmember Patterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Krause seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.