

**MINUTES
CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 22, 2011**

Meeting Location: City Hall, 330 Town Center Avenue

Attendees: Dave Williams, Mayor
Jace Brooks, Mayor Pro Tem
Jimmy Burnette, Councilmember
Daniel F. Foster, Councilmember
Richard I. Goodman, Councilmember
Kevin McOmer, Councilmember
Marty Allen, City Manager
Phyllis Edmond, HR Manager
Gregory Jay, City Attorney

Absent: Elvira Rogers, City Clerk

**5:30 P.M.
DINNER SESSION**

1. **City Council Informal Session** *Informal discussion among City Councilmembers and staff. Food provided for Elected Officials and staff. No action to be taken during session.*

**6:30 P.M.
Council Chambers**

2. **Special Presentation: 2011 State of the City Address**
State of the City Address presented by Mayor Williams.

**7:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Council Chambers**

3. **Call to Order**

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M.

4. **Announcements**

- a. *We're proud to announce that Suwanee was named Green Government of the Year by Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful. Suwanee was presented the award at the organization's annual awards banquet held on January 7. Suwanee's work over the past decade in protecting greenspace, resulting in an increase of over 2200% in protected acreage,*

was highlighted, in addition to other ongoing efforts, such as the LEED-certified City Hall and paperless Municipal Court.

- b. We're also proud that our FY 11 budget has won a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The award is given to those budgets that meet "the highest principles of governmental budgeting" and are "proficient in serving as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communications device." As the GFOA states, award winners have "pioneered efforts to improve the quality of budgeting and provide an excellent example for other governments throughout North America."*
- c. Mark your calendars - the 2011 events schedule has been set and is available on www.suwanee.com. 2011 will offer more than three dozen events, ranging from festivals, concerts, a Balloon Glow in the Gateway, several Town Center movie nights, and the twice-weekly popular farmers' market. Fitness fans will be pleased with the many events geared toward exercise and healthy living, including seven runs, the Blimpie Health and Fitness Expo, and May's Get Active event. We'll also see some new events from 2010 returning for a second year, including the Great American Campout, Arts in the Park, and the Korean Festival. More than 150,000 community members attended Suwanee's 2010 events and you won't want to miss the great offerings of 2011.*
- d. The popular and award-winning Get It in the Gateway event has returned for a second year and will be held Thursday, March 10 through Sunday, March 13. Each day, clues will be posted on the City's Facebook page and website. Those who figure out the clues will go to the participating businesses and register to win daily prizes and qualify for the grand prize drawing. Our Suwanee parents will certainly want to participate, as this year's grand prize – tickets to a Lady Gaga concert – will offer major brownie points with your kids!*

5. Pledge of Allegiance

Boy Scout Pack #1010 led the Pledge.

6. Approval of Minutes

a) January 25, 2011 Council Meeting minutes

Motion to approve by Councilmember Goodman, second by Councilmember Burnette and so carried 6-0.

7. Special Presentation: Tree City USA

Sara Visser of the Georgia Forestry Commission (representing Keep Georgia Beautiful) stated this is the 21st year Suwanee has held the designation of *Tree City USA* award.

8. Special Recognition

a) North Gwinnett High School Studio Program

Students at North Gwinnett High School are participating in an innovative learning project group. Projects in this program are developed by the students. A video created by the students was shared with the attendees.

9. Audience Participation

- Tom McConnell, 3795 Smithtown Road, Suwanee, GA. Mr. McConnell expressed concern about the City Charter being changed without input from the community in an open meeting concerning how votes are counted. All incumbents and past elected officials were elected under current vote statutes. He asked why the City is in a rush to change the Charter regarding vote procedures during an election year. Request this bill be tabled until there is a serious and engaging meeting with the citizens on this process. City placed a one inch ad in the paper to meet the minimum requirement. City Council has already given a bill to legislature without seeking citizen input. Have received input from state representatives and they concur that the citizens should have a public and open meeting to allow for citizen input.
- Debra Brown, 580 Stone Park Way, Suwanee, GA. Concerned about water problems on Stonecypher Road. When lines are flushed the water is brown. Can pipes be replaced? Where is the brown water coming from? A portion of Stonecypher had pipes replaced and the water is still brown. Pictures have been documented. This has been an issue for over five years.
- Dan Pittman, 1373 Riverview Run Lane, Suwanee, GA. Have lived in Suwanee for fourteen years. Concerned with transparency. With the greenspace issue no one ever told me were buying a new town. Another new town developing with the Old Town. Have looked over the Master Plan, beautiful job. The Plan sounds nice, but with the changing of the zoning and purchasing homes to make them rental properties will drastically change the character of Old Town. Worried about money spent on Pierce's Corner. Wish there was an avenue for public forum with back and forth dialogue.
- Marjorie Cook, 1342 Riverview Run Lane, Suwanee, GA. Excited that Suwanee again is recognized as a Tree City. Read recently that the City is spending funds on trees. Ms. Cook asked when will ornamental trees will be placed on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard beginning Tench Road in the City? Time is far past that this needs to be taken care of.
- Maurice Cook, 1342 Riverview Run Lane, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Cook stated that they continue to ask for a meeting where there can be back and forth communication, similar to Gwinnett County. Mr. Cook expressed concern that Peachtree Ridge High School students have not been honored by Council. He has reviewed the City minutes for the past seven years and there has been no recognition for students at Peachtree Ridge High School.
- Tom Hammond, 577 Pringle Drive, Suwanee, GA stated he supports the Charter change to majority vote. As for the change in an election year, there has been no statistics stating this will give anyone an advantage.
- Denise Varenhorst, 4115 Vista Pointe Lane, Suwanee, GA. Appreciates the vision of Suwanee. When the bond referendum came up for Greenspace voted against it, but could not be happier with the results of this action. Enjoy the City and entertain lots of people from all over the country. This is a great hometown. Her kids attend

Peachtree Ridge. Peachtree Ridge is using the Suwanee community garden.

- Todd Thomas, 3885 Summergrove Landing, Suwanee, GA. Live just outside the city limits. Lived here the past eighteen years and proud to say so. Know of no negatives about Suwanee. There has been a consistency with this mayor and council and previous mayor and council who offered vision for the community. People are proud to say they are from Suwanee. As for the Charter change, in support of the change. Wife has done a great deal of volunteer work in the City.
- John Green, 635 Waters Edge, Suwanee, GA. Have lived here for 20 years with pleasant memories. In listening to the Pledge to the Flag reminded of three important words: republic – representative democracy is a key foundational principal for this country ; liberty – extremely important. Representative democracy begins with leaders in our local governments. Whether agree or disagree, freedoms are protected. Citizens have a right in our country to speak; the third word – justice. Justice for all. Thank you for your service to the community, state and country. And thank you for the model you provide as a representative democracy.
- Beth Hilscher, 535 Ruby Forrest Parkway, Suwanee, GA. Business owner in Old Town Suwanee. Old Town in need of revitalization. Pierce’s Corner is a big component to revitalizing the area.
- Julie Purdue, 1401 Marshal Way, Suwanee, GA. Have lived here over 23 years. Council does a fantastic job of representing the citizens. Remember recently getting a survey in the mail from the City asking what the people wanted – and Council responded. Stated she thinks Old Town is a very important part of the City. Revitalization is needed and Pierce’s Corner could be a catalyst.
- Mike Southerland, 4668 Settles Bridge Road, Suwanee, GA. Have lived here ? years. Would like to see more openness between Council and citizens. In 1999 there was a house bill with no change about the election process. Would like more citizen input regarding Charter change.
- Don Trawick, 4643 Moore Road, Suwanee, GA. Ran for office several years ago. Believes everyone is concerned about Suwanee. There are questions and concerns that during an election the Charter is requested to be changed. Would like to see more about resigning seats. Thank you for your service - it is appreciated.
- LaDonna Griner, 3410 Smithtown Road, Suwanee, GA. Business owners in downtown Suwanee. Thank you for everything you’ve done so far. Would like to see more opportunities for Pierce’s Corner. Also, would like to see more events in Downtown Suwanee including use of the pavilion. There is a lot to draw from in the historic part of Suwanee.
- Linda Fleming, 527 Main Street, Suwanee, GA. The house on Main Street has been in the family for more than 50 years. There are empty houses on Main Street. Council is doing a great job. The Motto – Suwanee Exceeds Expectations – is great. Don’t rush. People expect you to exceed expectations. There are a number of older

residents in the historic area. Let's not forget the older people and those who have been in the community a long time. If they don't come to you, go to them.

Mayor Williams stated appreciation to the speakers who attended the Public Hearing regarding the Charter change. There has been some research completed regarding the change to majority. This change will bring Suwanee into line with other governments. Plurality elections is a throw back. There is no change in succession. The Charter information on this topic is for clarity. A PowerPoint of election information was shared.

Motion by Councilmember Goodman to adopt the agenda removing Item #10. ATP Update, second by Mayor Pro Tem Brooks and so carried 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS - Removed from Agenda

10. Consider ATP Update

NEW BUSINESS

11. Consider Donation of Emergency Call Phone from "Right to Hike"

The organization "Right to Hike" has approached the City about donating an emergency call phone for one of the trails.

Motion to approve by Councilmember Foster, second by Mayor Pro Tem Brooks and so carried 6-0.

12. Consider Land Donation from Dallas S. Hudgens Properties, LLC

Dallas S. Hudgens Properties, LLC proposes to donate to the City a 4.6-acre tract near the intersection of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and McGinnis Ferry Road.

Motion to approve by Mayor Pro Tem Brooks, second by Councilmember Goodman and so carried 6-0.

13. Consider Proclamation for 2011 Arbor Day Celebration

To celebrate Arbor Day and to maintain Tree City USA status, the City will hold a celebration on March 26, 2011. As part of the celebration, staff and citizens will be invited to participate in a tree planting at a yet to be determined location.

Motion to approve by Councilmember Burnette, second by Councilmember Goodman and so carried 6-0. Proclamation read by Councilmember Burnette.

14. Consent Agenda

a. Authorize Mayor to Execute Documents with Espy Services for a Telecommunications Review

This review will evaluate the telecommunications accounts associated with the City for billing errors, duplicated charges, etc., which could result in financial savings to the City. Staff has identified a company, Espy Services, who can do this review. The cost of the service is 50% of the recovered fees. In order to assign this review to Espy Services, the City must grant them authorization to examine our accounts with the various providers.

b. Adopt Seatbelt Policy

Georgia Municipal Association, Local Government Risk Management Services (LGRMS) has revised the Safety and Liability Management Grant Program for 2011 to waive the matching portion of the grant program. Effective January 1, 2011 the grant will pay for 100% of requested items, if approved, up to the maximum amount of \$6,000 per grant year for each of the two grant funds. A requirement to qualify is to have a "Seatbelt Use Policy." The Employee Handbook, Section 7-06 addresses us of seatbelts. Staff has amended this policy to comply with this requirement and to remain in compliance with CALEA standards.

c. Adopt Resolution to Participate in Georgia Dept. of Revenue Partnership Program

The Department of Revenue has implemented a new partnership program with municipalities and counties to gather data related to sales tax collection. DOR will compare the City's occupation tax records with the information reported by businesses to see if there are any discrepancies and/or unreported sales. In order to participate in this program, the City must adopt a resolution authorizing the City's involvement.

d. Authorize to Execute a Memorandum of Understanding with GBI for a Rapid ID Grant

The Police Department has been approved for a \$21,350.53 grant from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) in order to purchase electronic fingerprinting equipment. This purchase will allow officers to conduct fingerprint scans in the field. This is a 100% reimbursement grant. In order to proceed with the grant, the City must enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with GBI.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda by Councilmember Foster, second by Councilmember Goodman and so carried 6-0.

15. Executive Session: Legal, Personnel, and/or Real Estate Issues (if necessary)

Motion to ENTER Executive Session to discuss Real Estate by Councilmember Goodman, second by Councilmember McOmber and so carried 6-0.

Motion to EXIT Executive Session by Councilmember Goodman, second by Councilmember Burnette and so carried 6-0.

No Action.

16. Adjournment - Time 8:42 P.M.

Motion to Adjourn by Councilmember Foster, second by Councilmember Brooks and so carried 6-0.

Approved 03/22/2011