

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Danny Dunagan, George Wangemann, Sam Couvillon,
Barbara Brooks
OFFICIALS ABSENT: Ruth Bruner
STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Lackey, Angela Sheppard, Abb Hayes, Denise Jordan,
Alisa Grayson

Mayor Dunagan called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and served as the presiding officer.

Council Member Wangemann delivered the invocation after which the Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

PRESENTATION(S):

State of the City Address

Mayor Dunagan delivered the State of the City Address and used a power point presentation to supplement the report.

I would like to welcome everyone to tonight's meeting. On behalf of the Gainesville City Council, it is my pleasure to present the State of the City Address.

City of Gainesville finances are strong. We are very fortunate to have diversified sources of revenue. Our conservative approach to budgeting and Revenue forecasting has allowed us to direct the slight increases in revenue to our Capital Program for much needed engineering and construction projects that were placed on hold during and just after the Great Recession.

Since 2012, we have refinanced a number of Water and Sewer bonds. The City's strong credit rating contributed to low interest rates and produced more than \$8,000,000 in interest savings for the Citizens over the remaining life of these bonds.

Software enhancements were made to better serve citizens and businesses with online financial services. The major change has been in the property tax area.

New development and redevelopment within our community continues to grow the tax digest. Sales tax revenues are at historic highs. These revenues have been earmarked for public safety improvements, traffic improvements, storm water control, a youth sports complex and a renovated Senior Life Center.

Industry growth continues to be diverse, including equipment manufacturing, plastics, food, pharmaceuticals and craftsman-like millwork. Twelve new and expanded industries have announced 370 new jobs and more than \$74 million in new capital investment in the City of Gainesville in the past year.

As 2017 gets underway, we are on the verge of completing a number of projects that will have a positive impact on our City and help us prepare for the growth projected in the latest Census report. Let's take a closer look at these projects starting with our Public Works Department. As part of our Transportation Master Plan, we are working on the design of the Oak Tree Drive/Thompson Bridge Connector to move traffic off Green Street and E. E. Butler. After learning what was under Green Street, Public Works is now working with a design consultant and stakeholders in the community on options for improving traffic along Gainesville's most historic street.

Public Works crews resurfaced almost seven miles and swept 4,300 miles of city streets and removed 940 tons of leaves. One of our most exciting projects is the implementation of a new control center in the City Administration Building equipped with an Intelligent Transportation System that will link all City traffic signals through a fiber connection and provide coordination for improved traffic flow. City traffic signals can be monitored 24-7.

Recognizing the importance of city entryways Public Works completed Phase I of landscape installation at Exit 20 off I-985. Other beautification efforts will include streetscape improvements on Washington and Bradford Streets; around the Square; and upgraded pedestrian crosswalks on Jesse Jewell and E .E. Butler in the area now referred to as "The Moat" (a recommendation from our Downtown Strategic Plan).

Public Works is also working on the design and installation of a Memorial Garden and monument to honor more than eleven hundred people buried in the free grounds section of Alta Vista Cemetery.

The Gainesville Police Department received re-accreditation for the eighth time. Our Police work harder each year to meet the hundreds of standards set forth by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Efforts to reduce crashes and distracted driving resulted in a first place finish for the Gainesville Police Department in the Governor's Office of Highway Safety Challenge (in their division). They also received the Speed Award for their efforts to slow motorists. The community is getting a closer look at the Gainesville Police Department through quarterly meetings with area Clergy and the creation of the Police Explorer group for teenagers between the ages of 14 and 21 who are interested in a career in law enforcement.

Under the Community Service Center 105,000 meals were served through Meals on Wheels and the Senior Center, but an even greater example of service is that of Meals on Wheels volunteer Jack Bell who is in the audience today. Mr. Bell was delivering meals on January 11 when he found a client on the floor who had suffered a stroke. The client's family has expressed their gratitude for a program like Meals on Wheels that is about so much more than a hot meal.

Hopefully, by now you've seen the incredible artwork at some of our Bus Shelters. This Art Project was completed in partnership with the Vision 2030 Art Committee.

The Gainesville Fire Department ended 2016 with more than 8,400 calls for service. The Fire Department placed a LUCAS Chest Compression System device at all four stations ensuring rapid lifesaving equipment is readily available to cover all areas of the City and that's just what happened on February 5th of last year. Gainesville native Don Brewer was walking in his neighborhood of Longstreet Hills when bystanders saw him fall to the ground. They immediately began CPR and called 911. Firefighters responded where they found Mr. Brewer without a pulse. They applied the AED and LUCAS device and saved his life. Mr. Brewer is in the audience today along with the firefighters who came to his rescue.

In March of last year, fire fighters conducted a smoke alarm blitz in the Newtown area walking door to door installing smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and replacing batteries. In October, 13 members of the department were deployed with the Georgia Search and Rescue team to assist citizens affected by Hurricane Matthew.

2016 will be remembered as another year of record development activity in Gainesville. Our Community Development Department issued more than 2,200 building permits which equates

to more than 12,000 inspections. New home starts are up 7% from a year ago with 431 new home permits issued compared to one in 2010. Mundy Mill and Cresswind continue to be the number one selling residential community and active adult community in all of metro Atlanta. Further build out continues at Northlake Square and New Holland Market and a four-story Holiday Inn Express hotel is under construction on Dawsonville Highway.

The look of Midtown Gainesville will change drastically this year with the redevelopment of Atlanta Street Apartments and the demolition of the Jail on Main Street. We are also working with two local developers on potential new housing projects in this area. And, the connection between Midtown and Downtown will become more obvious once the Midtown Streetscaping project begins this summer.

In just a few weeks, we will receive proposals for the purchase and development of two large lots in our downtown area fronting Jesse Jewell Parkway. The City's vision for the property is in keeping with the recommendations of the Downtown Strategic Plan released last summer, i.e., residentially focused, pedestrian friendly, and something that will enhance our thriving downtown.

Our Water Resources Department operates the second largest water system by geographic area in Georgia serving over 50,000 water customers and 10,000 wastewater customers. I'm sure some of you noticed the improvements at Riverside Water Treatment Plant. We are constructing a new water quality building and rehabilitating the concrete structures built in the 1950's.

Water Resources brought home awards this year for the Band-A-long Trash Trap project on Flat Creek in partnership with Hall County. Two other award recipients are in the audience today. Belinda Folkes, Assistant Plant Manager of Riverside, won the Elizabeth McEntire Award and Kelli Cranford won the Customer Service Award from the Georgia Association of Water Professionals. We could not operate this large of a utility without employees like Belinda and Kelli.

The next group I would like to highlight is the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency. The impact they have on Gainesville can best be described as priceless. Tracking their programs, events, and venues tells us the impact is around \$16,000,000 which is four times their annual investment. In 2016, more than 750,000 people visited our parks and facilities. Renovations were completed at Wessell Park and Cabbell Field; and fourteen miles of Blueways formed the Gainesville Upper Lanier Water Trail. More than 1,500 children participated in youth sports and Pickleball became the latest buzzword.

The Parks and Recreation Annual Report shows the impact this agency has on our community. Other evidence of their impact is in the story I want to share with you about Cheryl Thigpin who is in the audience with us tonight. Cheryl has lived with multiple sclerosis for 30 years and has spent the last 8 or 9 years in a wheelchair. Cheryl learned about the water therapy classes and the handicapped accessible wheelchair ramp offered at Frances Meadows Aquatic Center and the rest, as they say, is history. Cheryl credits Jan Nance and Becky Simon, two of the instructors at Frances Meadows, for giving her a new lease on life. I'd like to thank Jan and Becky who are also in the audience for their work at Frances Meadows.

Our Administrative Services Department is busy implementing recommendations from an I.T. Master Plan to increase technology security and make city operations more efficient. Our Human Resources Division is in the process of going paperless through an Applicant Track

Program, a Records Management program, and new Payroll software. The days of being handed a paper check are over!

The City Clerk's Office reduced paper usage by more than 100,000 sheets of paper which equates to saving 12 trees!

The Chattahoochee Golf Course welcomed more than 27 thousand rounds of golf (an increase of 36 hundred rounds over the prior year). They also renovated restrooms, and made the clubhouse handicapped accessible. And, just before the end of last year, they received a new fleet of State-of-the-Art fuel injected Yamaha Golf Carts.

Downtown Gainesville continues to thrive under our Main Street Gainesville program and some very active downtown merchants. More than 100,000 people visited the square last year. Business owners confirm sales increased by more than 40% before and during an event. Private investment in downtown was just under \$3,000,000 in 2016. Tourism is big business in our community generating \$9,000,000 in tax revenue in 2015. This resulted in a savings of \$338 for each taxpayer.

Lake Lanier Olympic Park plays a significant role when it comes to tourism reporting an economic impact of more than 11 million dollars in the past three years. This Olympic legacy facility hosted numerous events in 2016 including the Olympic Qualifier Pan Am Games and now they're planning for the Dragon Boat World Championships in 2018.

The signs of Gainesville's success are everywhere, especially in the people I've mentioned tonight. I can comfortably say everyone in this audience has contributed in one way or another to our success.

In closing, I want to thank the Citizens of Gainesville for allowing me to serve as your Mayor. I want to thank this City Council for working so well together for the betterment of our community and I want to thank our City Manager Bryan Lackey and his entire staff for their daily commitment to excellence.

Fire Department 2016 Life Saving Awards

Fire Chief Jerome Yarbrough commented on the LUCAS Chest Compression System device that has been placed at all four stations noting it has been a great help.

Division Chief Keith Smith details surrounding the lifesaving actions administered to Don Brewer on February 5th. Jason Grady, Northeast Georgia Medical Center, also shared details, commented on the large number of cardiac episodes happening each per year and the low survival rate; and efforts to resolve the problem. Mr. Grady commended the firefighters for saving a life.

Mr. Smith presented Firefighters Chad Cooper and Palmer Loggins with the Life Saving Award certificate and a Valor Badge in recognition of their efforts in saving the life of Mr. Don Brewer.

Mr. Don Brewer commented on Gainesville being a great place to live.

City Manager's Office Georgia Certified Clerk

City Clerk Denise Jordan introduced Ball Ground City Clerk Karen Jordan who also serves as President Elect for the Georgia Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers Association (GMC/FOA).

President Elect Karen Jordan recognized Deputy City Clerk Alisa Grayson for being designated as a Georgia Certified Clerk. She presented her with a certificate for completion of the Georgia Clerks Education Program.

The Council, City Manager and Assistant City Manager extended words of appreciation.

Post Employment Service Recognition

Mayor Dunagan recognized post-employment retirees Lynne Randolph (Police), Frank Hood (Public Works), Betty J. Rider (Human Resources) and Michael West (Water Resources) for their years of service. They had a total accumulated service time of 110 years, 7 months and 20 days. He read a testimonial and presented each with tokens of appreciation. Council extended words of appreciation.

Police Department Valor Award – Michael Hand

Police Chief Carol Martin presented Officer Michael Hand with the Valor Award for his life saving actions on October 20, 2016.

Police Department Employee of the Year 2016 – Jason Pierce

Police Chief Carol Martin stated the employees choose the department's Employee of the Year. She presented Officer Jason Pierce with the Employee of the Year Award.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Dunagan congratulated the award recipients.

Council Member Thompson extended appreciation to the award recipients.

Council Member Wangemann stated Friday, February 17 was Arbor Day. He announced Gainesville received the 30th Year Award for being a Tree City.

Council Member Wangemann recognized citizens in attendance responding to his personal door-knocking efforts.

Council Member Couvillon stated he attended the Chicopee Woods Area Parks Commission (CWAPC) meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Josh Silavent, United Way, shared information about an initiative to assist local agencies in their efforts to interrupt the cycle of poverty in Gainesville/Hall County. He extended an invitation to a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Compass Center on March 1 at 615 Oak Street, Suite A. He also extended an invitation to a workshop for service providers on Friday, February 24 from 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM at First Baptist Church (751 Green Street).

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes: January 19, 2017 Work Session

Motion to approve the minutes accepting the edits as presented.

Motion made by Council Member Wangemann

Motion seconded by Council Member Brooks

Votes favoring the motion: Wangemann, Couvillon, Thompson, Brooks

Absent: Bruner

Resolutions

- A. BR-2017-07 General Banking
- B. BR-2017-08 Transfer Portion of Airport Industrial Park A-5 Ground Lease and Sale of Property at 1080 Airport Parkway
- C. BR-2017-09 Transfer of Urban Redevelopment Property to Gainesville Housing Authority
- D. PR-2017-06 Accept FAA-GDOT Grant for Runway Improvement Project, Award of Contract, and the Airport Layout Plan
- E. PR-2017-07 Authorization to Apply for and Accept an ARC Economic Development Grant Airport Terminal
- F. PR-2017-08 Authorization to Apply for and Accept an ARC Economic Development Grant Downtown Wireless Hot Zone

City Manager Bryan Lackey provided a brief overview of each resolution item.

Motion to adopt the resolutions as presented.

Motion made by Council Member Thompson

Motion seconded by Council Member Wangemann

Votes favoring the motion: Wangemann, Couvillon, Thompson, Brooks

Absent: Bruner

ANNEXATION/ZONING:

Second Reading: Ordinance 2017-02

Amend Unified Land Development Code - Sign Regulations

City Attorney Hayes called for a public hearing and outlined the public hearing process.

Community Development Department Director Rusty Ligon stated staff recommended a few changes to the sign code for clarity and distributed copies of the proposed changes which were noted as follows:

- Section 9-18-4-5, "Restrictions on Changeable Copy," shall be amended by adding subsection (f), which shall state as follows:
 - "(f) Size. Changeable copy electronic signs shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet in area."

- Section 9-18-12-1, "Building Permits and Conformance to Codes," shall be amended by adding subsection (e), which shall state as follows:
 - "(e) Billboards."
- Section 9-18-6-6, "Changeable Copy," shall be amended by deleting the word "nonconforming" from subsection (d).

City Attorney Hayes opened the floor for public comments. There being none, he returned the matter to the Council for a decision.

Majority vote to hold second reading on Ordinance 2017-02 with amendments, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND TITLE 9 ENTITLED "UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE" OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA; TO AMEND ARTICLE 9-18 ENTITLED "SIGN REGULATIONS" BY ELIMINATING IT IN ITS ENTIRETY AND SUBSTITUTING IN ITS PLACE THE LANGUAGE SET FORTH BELOW; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO PROVIDE FOR CODIFICATION; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Motion made by Council Member Thompson

Motion seconded by Council Member Brooks

Votes favoring the motion: Wangemann, Couvillon, Thompson, Brooks

Absent: Bruner

Second Reading: Ordinance 2017-03
Rename Touchdown Drive to Deshaun Watson Way

Majority vote to hold second reading on Ordinance 2017-03, AN ORDINANCE TO RENAME TOUCHDOWN DRIVE, LOCATED BETWEEN PEARL NIX PARKWAY AND CENTURY PLACE, TO DESHAUN WATSON WAY; REPEALING CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Motion made by Council Member Wangemann

Motion seconded by Council Member Brooks

Votes favoring the motion: Wangemann, Couvillon, Thompson, Brooks

Absent: Bruner

CITY MANAGER ISSUES:

Walton Summit Ground Breaking

City Manager Bryan Lackey announced the Walton Summit Ground Breaking Ceremony will be on Thursday, February 24 at 11:00 AM.

State of the City Address at Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce (GHCC) Board Meeting

City Manager Bryan Lackey announced the Mayor will deliver the State of the City Address again at the GHCC Board of Directors Meeting on Thursday, February 24.

CITY ATTORNEY ISSUES:

Agreement Regarding Abandonment of A Portion of New Harvest Drive

City Attorney Abb Hayes stated Mincey Marble is doing construction in the Gainesville Business Park and needs some right-of-way property currently controlled by the city. He distributed an agreement that confirms the city will address abandoning a section of right-of-way at its next meeting which ultimately allows Mincey Marble to proceed with construction and keep the project on schedule.

Motion to authorize the Mayor, City Manager and City Attorney to enter into the contract as presented.

Motion made by Council Member Thompson

Motion seconded by Council Member Wangemann

Votes favoring the motion: Wangemann, Couvillon, Thompson, Brooks

Absent: Bruner

Gainesville High School (GHS) 125th Anniversary

City Attorney Abb Hayes reminded everyone of the GHS 125th Anniversary celebration to be held on Sunday, February 26.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:30 PM

/ag

C. Danny Dunagan, Jr., Mayor

Denise O. Jordan, City Clerk