

**OFFICIAL MINUTES  
COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA  
REGULAR MEETING  
8:30 A.M., OCTOBER 7, 1998**

**PRESENT:** His Honor Mayor Bradford S. Brown, Commissioners Roosevelt Lawrence, Harold E. Jennings, Jonathan Williams and Doris A. Davis.

**INVOCATION:** The invocation was given by Commissioner Jonathan Williams.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the Mayor, Commissioners and everyone in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Davis moved and Commissioner Williams seconded the motion approving the minutes of the meeting of September 16, 1998 with the necessary corrections pointed out by Mayor Brown. The motion carried.

**PROCLAMATION PRESENTED TO GOLDEN ISLES ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

Mayor Brown presented a proclamation to Brian Thompson proclaiming the month of October as Golden Isles Arts and Humanities for National Arts and Humanities month.

**ATLANTA GAS COMPANY FRANCHISE FEE**

The City Manager reported that the City of Brunswick may revise a franchise fee for the use of the rights of way and other public property for the purpose of distributing gas within the City of Brunswick.

Following a discussion Mayor Brown recommended that the Commission review the information and discuss it at the next Commission meeting.

**1998 MILEAGE RATE**

The Director of Finance submitted the current 1998 Digest and a five-year history of Levy. He stated that the mileage rate of 11.00 mills would generate 2,652,000.00 for 1998, according to the 1998 tax digest totals submitted by the Glynn County Tax Commissioner.

Commissioner Jennings moved and Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion setting the mileage rate at 11.00 mills for the 1998 taxes. The motion carried.

Commissioner Jennings led a discussion concerning the City's delinquent taxes. He questioned the amount of the delinquent taxes. Commissioner Lawrence questioned the procedure for collecting delinquent taxes.

The City Attorney explained the way City taxes are handled after a tax sale. He recommended that the City use judicial sales that will allow the court to approve tax sales.

## **WATER RATES**

Commissioner Jennings led a discussion concerning the amount owed on bonds for improvements in the Wastewater Department.

The City Manager stated that collections are being made on delinquent water accounts over 90 days.

The City Manager stated that collections are being targeted on 90 day accounts in the amounts of \$200.00 to \$300.00.

The Director of Finance stated that he will be looking into all accounts still owning a lot of money, but continue to use water.

Following a lengthy discussion about water deposits, reconnecting fees, the 1997 Water and Wastewater budget and an outside independent audit of the Water and Wastewater Department; Commissioner Jennings moved and Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion to hire an outside independent auditor to audit the Water and Wastewater Department.

Commissioner Williams questioned where will the funds come from to pay for the audit.

The Director of Finance pointed out that the City presently have auditors auditing the City's books. Commissioner Jennings stated that they are the same auditors who audit the books each year.

On call for the vote the motion failed by vote of 2 to 2 to 0. Commissioner Lawrence and Jennings voting for and Mayor Brown and Commissioner Davis voting against. Commissioner Williams abstaining.

Commissioner Lawrence pointed out that the Parks and Recreation Department was audited and other Departments in the City were not audited. He stated that it is strange the City can conveniently find funds for other things.

Commissioner Davis stated that the City needs an auditor to audit every department and not single out one department.

Commissioner Williams agreed that one department should not be single out. An audit must be done in all departments. He stated that he was not against the audit.

Mayor Brown stated that last year a problem was pointed out about the Water and Wastewater's budget deficit. He pointed out that the City has not followed through with the recommendations submitted in the audit report. He stated that the City has to follow recommendations before trying to hire new auditors for \$12,000,00.

Commissioner Jennings stated that he did not feel that they should pass a water increase onto tax payers.

Mayor Brown pointed out that the City is not generating the funds necessary to operate the water facility. He stated that they need to work with the problems, but they may have to bite the bullet.

Commissioner Lawrence stated that the Water and Wastewater Department is 1.2 million dollar in debt and the City needs to clear this up and erase doubts in the citizens of Brunswick minds. Commissioner Lawrence mentioned that the

Director of Water and Wastewater stood before the Commission and stated that they had a balanced budget. He pointed out that the City needs an outside auditor.

Mayor Brown stressed that an audit will not determine the mistakes of 1997. He stated that there was bad management by the previous Mayor and City Manager. Elmo Richardson stated that all of the water rate increases were not adopted in 1995. He pointed out that the water rates should have been increased at 2% a year. Mr. Elmo stated that a letter was written to the previous Mayor and City Manager and occasionally the Commission to consider a rate increase to provide coverage on the bonds.

Commissioner Jennings expressed his concerns about the erroneous budget the Water and Wastewater Department turned in.

Elmo Richardson explained that the Water and Wastewater budget reflected on the amount needed to operate the Water and Wastewater Department. The budget that the Water and Wastewater Director submitted was given back to that Department and was told to take out the increase for water rates.

The Commission discussed the new water rates.

Commissioner Jennings moved and Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion declining to adopt the water rate ordinance. On call for the vote the motion failed by vote of 2 to 3. Commissioner Jennings and Lawrence voting for the motion Mayor Brown, Commissioner Davis and Williams voting against.

Commissioner Williams moved and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to adopt the water rate ordinance, and continue to deal with the audit.

Commissioner Williams told the Commission that it is evident that they need to increase the water rates in order to take care of the City's obligation.

Mayor Brown stated the Commission will pass the rate ordinance as addressed and also address the audit and other recommendations as far as operations in the Water and Wastewater Department.

Commissioner Lawrence questioned whether Commissioner Williams stated that there will be an audit conducted after the motion passed. Commissioner Williams told Commissioner Lawrence yes, the City is trying to clear it up. In the mean while, the City can investigate the Water Department to find out if there was something that went on that should not have been going on.

On call for the vote the motion carried by vote of 3 to 2. Mayor Brown, Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Williams voting for. Commissioner Lawrence and Jennings voting against.

#### **CITY MANAGER ITEMS**

The City Manager reported that the tipping fee charge should be set for the compost facility. He stated that the following tipping fees were submitted by staff:

Single Axle	(Dump Trucks and Trailers)	\$ 25.00
Double Axle	(Dump Trucks and Trailers)	\$ 50.00
Tractor Trailer	(18 Wheeler)	\$100.00

Commissioner Jennings moved and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion approve charges submitted by staff for the compost facility. The motion carried.

The City Manager reported that the Braswell project was not approved by the navy and the City need to move ahead and seek other funding for repairs to the dock.

The City Attorney stated that everything was not taken care of by September 15, 1998 by the Braswell Company.

The City Manager stated that \$10,000.00 is set aside for repairs to the city dock.

Commissioner Jennings moved and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion approving charges submitted by staff for the compost facility. The motion carried.

The City Manager reported that the Braswell Project was not approved by the Navy and the City need to moved ahead and seek other funding for repairs to the dock.

The City Attorney stated that everything was not taken care of by September 15, 1998 by the Braswell Company. The City Manager stated that \$10,000.00 is set aside for repairs to the City dock.

The City Manager reported that a new Personnel Director was hired and will start work on October 12, 1998. City Hall is overcrowded and the Personnel Director will be located at the Operations Center in SunTrust Bank. Space will be available for testing and meetings at the price of \$500.00 per month. He pointed out that the City need to think about renovation of City Hall. Employees will have to be moved while the building is being renovated. He pointed out that the City needs a facility that is user friendly.

Commissioner Jennings suggested that the employees be moved to Old City Hall.

Commissioner Lawrence suggested that the City Manager speak with the Board of Education to see if they have an available building.

Commissioner Jennings suggested that the City Manager look at three bids for a building to relocate employees.

The City Manager stated that he would like to keep the operations in the downtown area.

Jymie Herrington appeared before the Commission to discuss the concerns of the silver haired people in the community. She stated that these people cannot get out and attend meetings. She expressed their concerns about conducting an audit and having the former City Manager and Mayor appear before the Commission to answer questions. Ms. Herrington pointed out that the new City Manager inherited these problems.

Commissioner Jennings requested that the Data Processing Director appear before the Commission and submit a letter stating that the City of Brunswick computers are in compliance with the year 2000.

Commissioner Jennings reported that members of the HB489 Committee requested to meet more than once a month. They would like to meet at least once a week. He recommended that they speak with the County concerning meeting once a week. Commissioner Jennings pointed out that HB489 Committee will make a decision by July 1, 1999.

The City Manager stated that it is difficult to dictate how often the HB489 Committee can meet. He stated that some members on the HB489 committee feel strong about consolidation and some not so strong. The City Manager stated that the Director of Finance will gather tax information and submit it to them. He pointed out that HB489 was concerned with dual taxation.

Commissioner Davis questioned whether a police officer was present at the meeting. She stated that the Commission is concerned about an incident involving a Mayor and Commissioner being shot.

Commissioner Jennings recommended that the City Manager place police officers in the hallway while the Commission is meeting.

The City Manager stated that the Chief of Police have been informed about increased activity.

Commissioner Lawrence questioned whether everyone in the City is charged for sewer. The Director of Finance told Commissioner Lawrence that City residents should not be on septic tanks.

The City Manager pointed out that residents on Lanier Blvd still use septic tanks.

Commissioner Lawrence recommended that \$500-\$1,000.00 be donated to the Park and Tree Commission to take care of tree problems in the City.

Commissioner Lawrence stated that he would like to have an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.

Commissioner Lawrence moved and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to hold an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. The motion carried.

Following the Executive Section the meeting was adjourned.

**MEETING ADJOURNED.**

/s/ Bradford S. Brown  
Mayor

Attest: /s/ Georgia E. Marion  
City Clerk