

**CITY OF ELBERTON**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**  
Monday, April 6, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof the meeting of the Mayor and Council convened at 5:30 p. m. on Monday, April 6, 2020 at the Elberton Arts Center, 17 West Church Street with Mayor Guest presiding.

The City of Elberton announced March 30, 2020 a change to the location of its regular meeting of the Mayor and Council for April 6. Due to the Governor's executive order restricting public gatherings, the meeting will be held at the Elberton Arts Center, located at 17 West Church Street, which is a larger venue than City Hall.

Present were: Council Members Butler, Colquitt, Burton, Parham and Prince; City Attorney Jenkins, City Manager Dunn and City Clerk Churney.

Mayor Guest called the meeting to order and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and in prayer.

Mayor Guest stated "I would like to take this opportunity to ask all citizens of Elberton to follow the Governor's order from last week and stay at home. Please avoid all unnecessary travel. The more you stay at home, the faster all of this will be put behind us hopefully. So please, stay at home.

I am asking all businesses who do not provide essential products and services, such as groceries, food, medicine, banking, gasoline, or medical care, to close. I realize the Governor's executive order allows many businesses to stay open, but for the protection of everyone in Elberton, I am asking you to think of your neighbors and of your employees, and close your business unless you provide one of the essential products and services I just mentioned. We all need to do our part for the rest of this month.

Now I will ask the City Manager to report on what measures we have taken for our essential and non-essential services."

City Manager Dunn stated "Our offices closed to the public on Tuesday, March 17. We are still transacting all business over the phone, online, or by mail. This has gone really well, and we can handle all transactions this way.

ElbertonNET ceased installation appointments on March 17. As of April 2, we are handling trouble calls over the phone or outside the home, and are not going inside the home even for trouble calls.

ElbertonNET Internet network traffic is up 20% if you compare the first 15 days of March with the last 16 days of March. The network is holding up well, and we have not had any problems. The data caps for the month of March were released at no additional cost to the customers, and I anticipate April's being released as well.

The Elbert Theatre closed on March 16 and will remain closed at least through April 30. Several events through May are already cancelled.

Main Street Elberton has cancelled all events through the end of May.

The Elbert Hotel closed in March, handling only corporate business with pre-existing reservations. We are giving refunds to all customers who have to cancel their reservations. We've actually received cancellations on into July.

In accordance with the Governor's executive order last week, we have closed all non-essential services that the City provides. Although this order only lasts through April 13, we are planning on this disruption lasting longer.

Most of our employees provide essential services, and most are at work without a change in their schedule. We have about 100 employees in this category.

Part-time workers at the Elbert Theatre, the Elbert Hotel, and ElbertonNET have been furloughed without pay. This includes about 17 part-time workers.

We have about 20 full-time employees whose hours are being cut back due to non-essential work duties. All of these employees are being compensated through their paid time off benefits. Three employees have been on leave due to child or dependent care issues. Three part-time workers and two full-time workers are being placed on employer-filed unemployment insurance. One employee, who was to retire at the end of April, retired "early" last week. The full impact to our operation cannot be ascertained at this time, and the impact is very dependent on how long this goes on. Having large commercial locations, including schools, shut-down will impact our utility sales. This being spring when consumption is typically low anyway will help.

The Elbert Hotel will lose at least \$150,000 in revenue, and this could easily reach \$250,000 depending on how the summer plays out.

We are receiving calls with a lot of questions about who has to close their businesses. We try to give honest answers based on the guidelines the Governor put out, but this was 22 pages. Many people have to make their own decisions about what kind of liability they take on by keeping their employees working. The Governor's order on Thursday only empowered the Department of Public Health, the State Patrol, and GEMA to enforce his order. Late Friday afternoon, the Governor issued another executive order allowing the elected Sheriffs of each county to enforce his order, basically appointing them, along with the Health Dept. and State Patrol, to decide which businesses are non-essential and have to close. If there are any questions about that, I would refer them to Sheriff Andrews.

It is my understanding that the Governor issued a second executive order on Friday to allow law enforcement to enforce parts of his executive order, but he specifically denies them the ability to close businesses. Only the Health Dept., State Patrol, GEMA, or the Sheriff can do that.

Interpreting the Governor's order is very, very difficult, so if I have misspoken in any of this I apologize, and of course I am not giving anyone legal advice as to what any individual or any business should be doing or not doing during this crisis.

Personally, I agree with the Mayor that everyone should stay at home as much as possible so that we can get through this crisis as soon as possible."

Council Member Butler motioned to approve the minutes of the March 2 meeting, seconded by Council Member Prince and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Colquitt, Burton, Parham, Prince).

There were no speakers from the floor.

Council Member Colquitt introduced the following Resolution for consideration:

**RESOLUTION**  
**A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2018 UPDATE OF THE CITY OF ELBERTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.**

WHEREAS, the 1989 Georgia General Assembly enacted House Bill 215, the Georgia Planning Act, requiring all local governments to prepare a comprehensive plan in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; that the local government determines when a plan amendment is necessary to address changing circumstances that may have detracted from the usefulness of the plan as a guide to local decision-making; and

WHEREAS, the City of Elberton has determined a need to amend its comprehensive plan to add to the community work program regarding community development activities.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Elberton that the Comprehensive Plan amendment for the City of Elberton, Georgia dated 2020, is to include an amendment in the following respect and is hereby adopted, and furthermore, that the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission shall be notified of said adoption within seven (7) days of the adoption of this resolution:

**Section 1.**

Add Activity Item 28 – "Partner with the DDA to rehabilitate the Bailey Building at 23 North Public Square to incorporate mixed use" is added to the Community Work Program.

Adopted this 6th day of April, 2020

City Manager Dunn read the Resolution as presented. Council Member Colquitt motioned to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Council Member Burton and the motion pass unanimously (Butler, Burton, Parham, Prince, Colquitt).

Council Member Parham introduced the following Resolution for consideration:

**RESOLUTION  
CITY OF ELBERTON, GEORGIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) REDEVELOPMENT FUND  
(RDF) 2020 APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

WHEREAS, the City of Elberton City Council wishes to approve the submission of an application to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Redevelopment Fund (RDF) program for funding assistance with the renovation of the Bailey Building located at 23 North Public Square, Elberton GA 30635; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Council have requested the assistance of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission in preparing the CDBG application; and

WHEREAS, certain actions are required by the City in support of the application.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the City of Elberton by this resolution do hereby approve the submission of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Redevelopment Fund (RDF) application for the purpose of funding the renovation of the above mentioned building;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council do hereby authorize to the Mayor to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and obtain the aforementioned funds, and the Mayor's signature shall be attested by the City Clerk on behalf of the City;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if awarded, the Mayor and Council designate the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission as the grant administrator, in accordance with local government requirements, the Common Rule Selection Process, and the Redevelopment Fund program guidelines;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council do hereby appropriate up to 20% or \$180,000 as local leverage for the project. This resolution has been adopted at the regular meeting of the

Elberton City Council meeting on the 6th day of April, 2020.

City Manager Dunn read the Resolution as presented. Council Member Parham motioned to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Council Member Prince and the motion pass unanimously (Butler, Burton, Parham, Prince, Colquitt).

Council Member Butler motioned to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Council Member Parham and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Colquitt, Burton, Parham, Prince).

1. Approved the expenditures that exceed the city manager’s purchasing authority.

<b>Department: Fire Department</b>		
17 sets of turnout gear – coat, pant, boots, gloves, and helmet		
Vendor:	Brand of Gear	Bid:
Fireline <b>RECOMMENDED</b>	Veridian	\$41,760.50
Carolina Fire Equipment	Warrior	\$44,771.98
Carolina Fire Equipment	Viking	\$61,720.98
Nafeco	PBI	\$75,633.00
Nafeco	Armor AP	\$68,018.00
Municipal Equipment Co.	Janesville	\$56,491.00
Bennett Fire Products	Globe	\$47,770.00

<b>Department: ElbertonNET</b>		
Cable Modem Termination System (CMTS) replacement. This is the core router that enables all modems to connect to the Internet. Replaces an Arris C4 model purchased in 2012. New CMTS will be an Arris E6000 Gen 2. Includes first year tech support.		
Vendor:		Bid:
Advanced Media Technologies <b>RECOMMENDED</b>		\$211,616.00
Associate Partners/Zcorum		\$273,900.00

<b>Department: Police Department</b>		
Two 2020 full size four door all-wheel drive police pursuit utility vehicles.		
Vendor:	Year - Model	Bid Amount:
Allen Vigil Ford	2020 - Ford Explorer	\$66,864.00
Brannen Ford	2020 - Ford Explorer	\$71,800.00
Wade Ford <b>RECOMMENDED</b>	2020 - Ford Explorer	\$66,394.00
Wade Ford	2020 - Ford Explorer	\$68,946.00
John Jones Dodge	2020 – Dodge Durango	\$62,094.00
John Jones Dodge	2020 – Dodge Durango	\$67,246.00

2. Authorized the execution of and Intergovernmental Contract with Elbert County for the housing of inmates in the County Jail and for dispatch services for the police and fire departments.

3. Awarded the contract for architectural services for the Redevelopment Fund project for 23 N. Public Square to Carter Watkins Associates.

City Manager Dunn presented the following reports:

- Financial Report ending February 29, 2019
- Monthly report on the activities of various departments

**HUMAN RESOURCES:**

There have been various changes in staffing over the month.

- Randy Lane retired after 43 years of service to the Fire Department.
- Brad Burton was promoted to Shift Commander within the Fire Department.
- Darren Driver was promoted to Assistant Shift Commander within the Fire Department.
- Kris Burton was promoted to the position of Public Works Director. Kris brings 25 years of experience in the Public Works Department to the position.
- Ken Crowe has taken on the Foreman position for the Parks and Rights-of Way crew.
- Lee Manley will be Foreman for the Sanitation and Recycling crew.
- Lisa Higginbotham accepted the position of Manager of Customer Care due to Lynn Saxon retiring in July after 46 years of service with the City of Elberton.
- Ashley Miller has been hired as Customer Service Representative. She also works at the Samuel Elbert Hotel on weekends.
- Sam Propes transferred from the Water/Sewer Division to the Natural Gas Division of Elberton Utilities.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

The Fire Department responded to 53 alarm calls for the month of March 2020. These calls consisted of 3 Structure Fires (City), 1 Structure Fire (County), 3 Vehicle Accidents, 37 Medical Emergencies, 1 Gas Leak, 3 False Alarms, 1 Power Line Down, 1 Grass Fire, 1 Cooking Fire, 1 Hazardous Spill, and 1 Service Call. The department conducted 0 fire inspections, and issued 2 burn permits. The Fire Department also conducted 610 hours of in-house training and 80 out of station training for the month.

**BUILDING INSPECTOR:**

The building inspection department issued 9 permits for the month of March, 2020. The department issued 3 building permits, 5 electrical permits, 1 plumbing permit, and 1 sign permit. During this same period there were 1 building inspection, 4 electrical inspections, and 7 site visits.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT:**

The Elberton Police Department released their monthly activity for the month of February 2020. The department recorded:

1013	Calls for Service
421	Vehicle Traffic Stops
104	Incident Reports were filed
272	City Court cases made
16	Traffic accidents were investigated
85	People were arrested for various charges

- 21 Person was arrested for Driving under the Influence
- 72 Department Training Hours

The Group A crimes of the (NIBRS) National Incident Based Reporting System are sent to the FBI on a monthly basis. The Group A crimes for February 2020 are as follows:

Group A Crimes	February 2020	January 2020	% Change +/-
Kidnapping:	0	0	No Change
Rape Offenses:	1	1	No Change
Robbery:	1	3	Down 66.6%
Assault:	11	12	Down 8.3%
Burglary:	7	5	Up 40%
Larceny/Theft:	7	7	No Change
Motor vehicle theft:	0	0	No Change
Counterfeiting/Forgery:	1	1	No Change
Fraud Offenses:	1	7	Down 85.7%
Destruction/Damage/Vandalism:	7	7	No Change
Drug Offenses:	18	11	Up 63.6%
Weapons Violations:	1	0	Up by 1 incident
Animal Cruelty	1	0	Up by 1 incident

**WATER & SEWER:**

The crews replaced the water service line at 1142 Oglesby Boulevard due to a leak in service line. The crews replaced an angle valve at 1116 Willie Black Road. The crews replaced the water service line at the city police firing range. The crews terminated a water tap at 52 Tower Lane and made a new water tap at the same address. The crews installed a ¾ inch water tap and meter at 1137 Russell Ridge Drive. The crews performed the annual system wide hydrant flush on March 21 and 22, 2020. Contractors began work March 23, 2020 on Tower Lane water tank installing an automated valve that will control levels in the tank.

The crews cleaned and inspected sewer mains in the sewer system. The crews repaired a sewer main and ditch line on Oak Drive. The crews cleaned and inspected several sewer services within the system. The crews installed a new flow meter that measures the wastewater discharge from Pilgrims to the city sewer system.

The crews installed new sulfur dioxide cylinder scales at the Fortson’s Creek Treatment Plant. The crews drained and cleaned basins #1 and #2 at the Filter Plant. The crews ran the belt press at the Filter Plant. Contractors began work on the chemical feed improvements at the Filter Plant.

**ELECTRIC:**

The Electric department pulled 18 old poles during the month of March where transfers had been completed. The department also started tearing out a 3 phase line that is no longer in use at the old McClanahan rock crusher. The department changed out bad poles on Kathwood Drive, Filter Plant Drive, Indian Hill Road, and Melody Lane. The department replaced 4 services due to damage by squirrels.

### **CITY MARSHAL:**

This office investigated an incident of Interference with Public Utilities and Theft of Services at an address on Williams St. The alleged offender had moved out of town.

### **PUBLIC WORKS:**

Construction continues on 17 N. McIntosh St. The plumbing has been completed, and sheet rock is being installed now. The construction crew repainted 16 bathroom ceilings and replaced the air filters at the Elbert Hotel.

The Street Dept. completed replacing 180 feet of storm drain on North McIntosh Street and also cleaned out storm drains around town due to the heavy rain. The Street Dept. did maintenance work on Forest Ave., on Wildwood Dr., and poured two sections of sidewalk on Springdale Rd. The Street Dept. filled in potholes at Swift Parking Lot and on Auld Ave.

### **NATURAL GAS:**

The Gas Department completed the Sand Hill Rd main line extension and installed one new poultry farm with three houses. The department also installed three new residential customers as a result of these construction projects. The department started the Northeast Expansion Phase 2 project which consists of a pipeline expansion of about 38,000 feet. About 10,000 feet has been installed in March.

### **MAIN STREET:**

During the month of March, Main Street and the DDA has been steadily preparing for the upcoming months of events and festivities that are having to either be cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Main Street is participating in webinars almost on a daily basis in order to stay up to date with all of the small business information that is being put out by the state and the government in order to help all of our small businesses as much as possible. Main Street is constantly sending out updates to all of our local small businesses letting them know of everything that is being offered to small businesses all over.

Main Street Elberton and the Elbert Chamber have teamed up to bring a little fun to a child near you. Starting March 30, we're encouraging local businesses and residents to put a teddy bear in their window for kids to "find." Take pictures with the bears and see how many you can locate!

Social distancing is the best tool we have to flatten the curve and slow the spread of coronavirus, but it can be especially tough for kids as they transition from seeing their friends each day at school to feeling isolated. To help entertain and engage little ones, neighborhoods around the world have been hosting Bear Hunts. They can be a great distraction for children and parents alike, and it's a way to foster community closeness despite physical distance.

We are currently working on other social distancing activities that we may do with our businesses to keep their name buzzing throughout the community.



**ELBERT THEATRE:**

There were 33 events including Advantage Behavioral Health’s movie field trip; COE’s *Harriet*, *Bad Boys for Life* & *Sonic the Hedgehog* movie showings; Encore Productions’ *Hank Williams* rehearsals and performances & *The Carol Burnett Show* Open Reading; Encore Junior’s *Beauty & the Beast Jr* rehearsals and ETF’s paint class and summer camp registration at the Elbert Theatre & Arts Center from Feb 21-Mar 23.

The Theatre and Arts Center closed in March and will remain closed at least through April 30 due to the global pandemic. Several events planned for the second calendar quarter have been cancelled.

A total of 768 patrons visited the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center between Feb 21-Mar 23.

**ELBERT HOTEL:**

The latest occupancy statistics are as follows:

	<u>FY18</u>	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>
July	29.5%	38.8%	47.2%
August	33.8%	33.3%	50.2%
September	45.6%	36.3%	50.1%
October	42.8%	48.9%	39.5%
November	34.2%	29.9%	41.0%
December	32.5%	40.9%	30.3%
January	27.2%	35.5%	21.9%
February	29.0%	26.6%	33.1%
March	37.9%	35.0%	
April	32.3%	40.5%	
May	43.1%	52.7%	
June	36.4%	50.4%	
AVERAGE	35.4%	39.1%	<b>39.2%</b>

Visits in the month of February improved greatly over January, and was the best February which is usually a slow month also. The property is significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and lost dozens of reservations for the spring. The property closed in March, however some who already had reservations are being served on a case-by-case basis, especially those that work with our local industries and are repeat guests.

The financial impact to this department cannot be overstated, and only after this crisis is over can the full impact be determined. It is likely the decrease in business will be felt throughout the summer of 2020. Occupancy for the month of March will finish at 19.2%, and April will be less than 5% most likely. Lost sales will likely be in excess of \$150,000 through May, 2020.

Matters to be presented by the City Attorney:

- Dilapidated housing report.

There being no further business to come before Council, upon proper motion and second the meeting was adjourned.

*Adopted: May 4, 2020 [Butler/Prince, Unanimous]*