



# CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH

CITY COUNCIL  
OCTOBER 24, 2019

Council Meeting Room

Regular Meeting

6:30 PM

7224 GA HIGHWAY 21  
PORT WENTWORTH, GA 31407

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Mayor Gary Norton called the meeting to order.

**2. PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Reverend Paul Mongin, Pastor of First Baptist Church of Port Wentworth, led in Prayer and Mayor Gary Norton led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL - CLERK OF COUNCIL**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Gary Norton	Mayor	Present	
Debbie Johnson	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	
Linda Smith	Council Member	Present	
Shari Dyal	Council Member	Present	
Mark Stephens	Council Member	Present	
Bill Herrin	Council Member	Present	
Thomas Barbee	Council Member	Present	
Phil Jones	City Administrator	Present	
James L. Coursey, Jr.	City Attorney	Present	
Shanta Scarboro	Clerk of Council	Present	
Brian Harvey	Director of Development Services	Present	
Matt Libby	Director of Public Safety	Present	
Lee Sherrod	Police Major	Present	
Lance Moore	Chief of Fire Operations	Present	
Chris Lee	Project Manager	Present	
Jim Vaughn		Present	

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Council Member Shari Dyal made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Council Member Bill Herrin. Vote was unanimous.

**5. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

There were none to report.

**6. ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS**

There were none to report.

**7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

A. City Council - Regular Meeting - Sep 17, 2019 6:30 PM

**RESULT:** ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]  
**MOVER:** Mark Stephens, Council Member  
**SECONDER:** Debbie Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem  
**AYES:** Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

B. Executive Session - September 17, 2019

Council Member Mark Stephens made a motion to adopt the minutes from the September 17, 2019 Executive Session. Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson. Vote was unanimous.

**8. COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS**

There were none to report.

**9. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Committee Reports

**RESULT:** APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]  
**MOVER:** Linda Smith, Council Member  
**SECONDER:** Shari Dyal, Council Member  
**AYES:** Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

**10. CONSENT AGENDA**

**RESULT:** ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]  
**MOVER:** Bill Herrin, Council Member  
**SECONDER:** Mark Stephens, Council Member  
**AYES:** Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

- A. Pay Request No. 1 from A.D. Williams Construction Company, Inc., in the amount of \$10,431.00 for the Della Steele Park Paving Project.
- B. Pay Request No. 2 from B & D Clearing, Inc. in the amount of \$19,436.83 for the Mobley Park Drainage Improvements Phase 2.
- C. Pay Request No. 4 from Griffin Contracting, Inc., in the amount of \$702,729.78 for the Hendley Road & Monteith Road Improvement Project.

**11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was none to report.

**12. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Employee Christmas Bonus

Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson suggested to Council for the Department Heads to receive \$50.00 more than staff for the Employee Christmas Bonus. Thus, the motion was made for full-time and part-time employees to receive \$100.00 and Department Heads to receive \$150.00.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

B. City of Port Wentworth Charter Amendments

**DISCUSSION 1**

Mayor Gary Norton suggested that a workshop be held to discuss the Charter amendments.

Council Member Thomas Barbee concurred with the Mayor, but asked that at least two to three workshops be held prior to making any decisions and that the proper time be taken to review all changes.

Council Member Mark Stephens agreed with Council Member Thomas Barbee.

Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson stated that Council needs to look at the Charter as a whole and not just in sections.

Council Member Linda Smith went on record to state that she was opposed to any delay related to the Charter amendments and expressed that Council needed to move forward with making the necessary changes.

James L. Coursey, Jr., City Attorney, stated that there are time limits to submit any Charter amendments to the State of Georgia and if the revisions are not advertised within 60 days (Nov of 2019) to legislation it will not go forward. Legislation cannot consider any changes until January 2020.

Council Member Shari Dyal stated that if the Charter amendments are going to be delayed, she suggests starting on the revisions as soon as the 1st of January to take to allow for more meeting times to discuss.

**DISCUSSION 2**

Council Member Thomas Barbee posed the question: "Does Council not have the power to pass Ordinances and Resolutions?"

Mr. Coursey responded to Councilman Barbee's question by stating "yes, that is your governing authority. You will be operating under the old Charter until it is appealed or replaced."

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>DELAYED [5 TO 1]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Debbie Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee
<b>NAYS:</b>	Smith

C. Phase 4 of Fiber Optic Seimitsu Project

Matt Libby, Chief Port Wentworth Public Safety Department, was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council and stated that Phase 4 of the Fiber Optic Project was budgeted to provide service to the new City Hall.

Chief Libby went on to state that the project was designed to provide service to all City of Port Wentworth government buildings first, then will be opened up for general public usage upon Council's approval.

Council Member Thomas Barbee asked "if Council will be able to live stream City Council Meetings once the project is complete?"

David Stahl, Captain Port Wentworth Fire Department, replied "yes, this will be an available option once this phase of the project is done."

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

- D. Subdivision Application submitted by Thomas & Hutton Engineering Inc., on behalf of BEP Rice Hope, LLC., for PIN # 7-0906-04-069 (100 Lakeside Blvd) located in a M-P-O (Master Plan Overlay) Zoning District for a Final Plat of a Major Subdivision (Parkside Phase 1D-1 ) for the purpose of Single-Family Homes

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Debbie Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

- E. Subdivision Application submitted by Neil McKenzie, Coleman Company, INC., on behalf of BEP RH Rice Hope, LLC., for PIN # 7-0906-04-062 (Rice Hope Road) located in a M-P-O (Master Plan Overlay) Zoning District for a Final Plat of a Major Subdivision (Mulberry Subdivision Phase I ) for the purpose of Single-Family Homes

Neil McKenzie, Coleman Company, Inc., was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson asked Mr. McKenzie to clarify the exact location of this project.

Mr. McKenzie stated that the homes will be located behind Publix where the Admore Apartments are being constructed; Mulberry Boulevard will be on the left. No homes are there currently, but this is the location where the homes will be built; roads are in but no homes yet.

Mayor Norton asked "will there be an entrance on the side of Rice Hope?"

Mr. McKenzie stated that this construction will have no affect on Rice Hope due to the homes having its on entrance, with the primary entrance being northwest of the main entrance.

Thirty-two (32) homes will be built in phase 1 of the plan.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Shari Dyal, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

- F. Subdivision Application submitted by North Salem Baptist Church for PIN #: 7-1017-01-011 (955 Highway 30) located in a R-A (Residential Agriculture) Zoning District for a Final Plat of a Minor Subdivision for the purpose of Single-Family Home

Charlie Bowel, Member of North Salem Baptist Church, was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council. Mr. Bowel stated that this project simply involves taking out the old house that's currently on the lot and building a new home.

Council Member Mark Stephens asked "is this home on the same side as Woods Seafood?"

Mr. Bowel responded, "yes it is."

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Debbie Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Shari Dyal, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

- G. Subdivision Application submitted by Jessica Vick, Roberts Civil Engineering, LLC., on behalf of Landmark 24 Homes of Savannah, LLC., for PIN # 7-0906-01-032 (Miller Park Circle) located in a P-R-M (Planned Residential Multi-Family) Zoning District for a Preliminary Plat of a Major Subdivision (Rice Creek Phase III) for the purpose of Single-Family Homes

Jessica Vick, Roberts Civil Engineering, LLC, was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council. Ms. Vick went on to state that this application seeks approval of new subdivision plans.

**DISCUSSION 1**

Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson asked "is this an extension of Rice Creek going toward Rincon?"

Ms. Vick stated, yes it is.

Council Member Mark Stephens asked "how many homes will be in the new phase?"

Ms. Vick responded by stating that there will be thirty-three (33) homes in phase 3 and thirty (30) homes in phase 4.

Council Member Thomas Barbee asked "will a road be constructed where Miller Park Circle ends?"

Ms. Vick responded by stating that Miller Park Circle will loop around and Burnt Oak Road will have an entrance.

Council Member Shari Dyal further explained the roads by stating that Miller Park Circle will be extended out where Miller Park and Burnt Oak meet.

**DISCUSSION 2**

James L. Coursey, Jr. City Attorney, informed Council that there are letters from T.R. Long Engineering with a number of exceptions to the plat and asked Ms. Vick if all of these have been taking care of? Mr. Coursey went on to also state that there are some red flags within the letters; paragraph number 22 on 12.D; page GE-parcel of land outside of the subdivision that will remain-what is that parcel, who owns it and who is responsible for it?

Ms. Vick responded to Attorney Coursey's questions by stating we have since fixed the issued referenced on 12.D in that we will not be developing on someone's land.

Mr. Coursey then asked Ms. Vick to speak on the issue regarding sub service soils and stated that the City does not want to take over the roads with bad underlayment; what is being done about this?

Ms. Vick stated that the soils will be higher and better than what they currently are.

Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Johnson asked " is there a study to prove this?"

Ms. Vick stated, no.

**DISCUSSION 3**

Brian Harvey, Director of Port Wentworth Development Services Department, reminded Council that this agenda item is preliminary so it will have to go through the City's approval process before any final decisions are made.

Mayor Gary Norton asked if this item went before the Planning and Zoning Commission and was it approved?

Mr. Harvey stated that it did go before Planning and Zoning and was approved.

Council Member Bill Herrin asked Ms. Vick "are you aware that you will be building close to the Rincon Industrial Park and how will this affect your homes?"

Ms. Vick responded by stating that they are aware and that there will be a good bit of wooded buffer and wetland track so it shouldn't affect their construction.

**VOTE**

Council Member Thomas Barbee approved this agenda item contingent upon all comments listed on the October 10, 2019 and the October 27, 2019 letter be addressed prior to construction beginning. Total items being thirty-nine (39). Seconded by Council Member Mark Stephens. Vote was unanimous.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

- H. Subdivision Application submitted by Jessica Vick, Roberts Civil Engineering, LLC., on behalf of Landmark 24 Homes of Savannah, LLC., for PIN # 7-0906-01-032 (Miller Park Circle) located in a P-R-M (Planned Residential Multi-Family) Zoning District for a Preliminary Plat of a Major Subdivision (Rice Creek Phase IV) for the purpose of Single-Family Homes

Jessica Vick, Roberts Civil Engineering, LLC, was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council.

**VOTE**

Council Member Shari Dyal approved this agenda item contingent upon all comments listed on the October 10, 2019 and the October 27, 2019 letter be addressed prior to construction beginning. Total items being thirty-nine (39). Seconded by Council Member Mark Stephens. Vote was unanimous.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Shari Dyal, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

**13. RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES/PROCLAMATIONS**

- A. Ordinance No. 19-04, Budget Adjustment FY20, First Reading for the GOHS Grant Car Seat Fitting Station.



Matt Libby, Chief Port Wentworth Public Safety Department, was present to answer any questions of Mayor and Council.

Chief Libby went on to state that Public Safety submitted a grant to the Georgia Office of Highway Safety to complete education and training to each sworn Police and Fire station on how to properly install car seats. At any time both citizens and non-citizens of Port Wentworth can stop by any Port Wentworth Police or Fire Station to get assistance with proper car seat fitting. Chief Libby stated that this is a 100% reimbursable grant.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mark Stephens, Council Member
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Smith, Dyal, Stephens, Herrin, Barbee

**14. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There were none to report.

**15. PUBLIC COMMENTS - REGISTERED SPEAKERS**

Wayne Champagne, 702 Bonnybridge Road, addressed Mayor and Council to state that the City utilized a segregation pond and the City loss use of this which began sewage issues. Mr. Champagne went on to further explain the type of issues related to this matter and because of its depth, Mayor Gary Norton requested that Mr. Champagne contact the Clerk of Council to request to be on the November 2019 Regular City Council Meeting agenda.


Doug Tomlinson, 222 Phillips Avenue, stated that the Council Forum hosted by the Port Wentworth Chamber of Commerce was really good and that several topics were covered. Mr. Tomlinson expressed that he felt that the questions posed were also good and that he appreciated everyone's participation.

Janet Hester, 440 Meinhard Road, asked Council if the Seimitsu project would offer fiber optic service to Monteith and Hendley Road? Chief Libby stated that Phase 4 is not in the plans for the neighborhoods as of yet. However, the future plan is to offer usage to the City. The main purpose as of now is to allow connectivity for all City buildings. There are no plans for any subdivisions.

Mayor Gary Norton thanked Tiffany Lancaster, Director of Port Wentworth Leisure Services Department for all of the hard work she and her staff put in for the Tommy Thomas Pavilion Dedication Ceremony. GREAT JOB!!!

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Council Member Bill Herrin made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Thomas Barbee. Vote was unanimous.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Gary Norton

The foregoing minutes are true and correct and approved by me on this 21st day of November, 2019.

ATTEST:



Shanta M. Scarboro, Clerk of Council