CITY OF BOWMAN

Bowman City Hall Monthly meeting February 12th, 2025

**MEMBER’S Present** Mayor, Scott Harpold Council Member, Mary Clark Council Member, Leah Carey

Council Member, Betty Jo Maxwell Council Member, Jeff Spratlin Attorney, Simon Williams

# STAFF PRESENT:

City Clerk, Tifany Verdell

Mayor Scott Harpold called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The mayor asked for a moment of silence for the recent deaths of David Harper and Terry Dalton. The pledge followed the moment of silence.

# Approval of minutes:

Council member Spratlin made a motion to approve December 11th, 2024, minutes. Councilwoman Carey interjected, stating she had requested changes to the minutes, which had not been edited so the minutes were not correct to be approved. Council member Spratlin followed up by stating that the City Clerk Verdell had sent out an email explaining what was required in the minutes, and the changes Councilwoman Carey is requesting is not a requirement that has to be changed. Mayor Harpold asked Clerk Verdell to reread the requirements for meeting minutes. Mayor Harpold stated the importance of approving minutes and asked for a second. The attorney also restated the importance of approving minutes. Motion died for lack of a second. Councilwoman Carey made a motion to amend the minutes to add her statements (*She spoke on several issues and asked questions that were of concern to her and other citizens of Bowman. These issues consisted of; The park road, the LMIG money, the city cemetery, and the goals of the mayor since taking office. She requested an apology from the mayor for the inappropriate comment he made towards her in a previous meeting. She also requested an apology to the citizens of Bowman who had seen the pornographic material that was posted on his Facebook page. She also asked the mayor to resign from his position.*

*)* Seconded by Councilwoman Clark. The mayor called for a vote by show of hands, the vote was 3 approved (Carey, Maxwell, Clark) 1 opposed (Spratlin). The motion passed 3-1. The mayor asked for a motion.to approve the January 8th, 2025, minutes. Council member Spratlin motioned to approve the January 8th, 2025, minutes, 2nd by Councilwoman Clark. The mayor called for a vote by show of hands. motion passed unanimously.

**Capital Improvement Budget:** Mayor went over the capital improvement budget as follows: 1. Improvements to the park (57,000), Playground equipment (40,000), Bathrooms (12,000), Security System (5,000) \* paid for with ARPA and Splost Funds. 2. Bowman Improvement project Est. (147,000) using T-Splost monies. 3. Downtown improvement: Blacktop of square, mural, utility equipment, and repairs. (140,000) Total in the estimate: $287,000.00. The mayor called for a vote to approve the capital improvement budget. Councilwoman Clark made a motion to approve the Capital Improvement Budget, 2nd by Councilwoman Maxwell. The mayor called for a vote by show of hands. Motion passed unanimously.

**Decorum Ordinance:** Mayor went over the details of the ordinance and stated this would be the 3rd and final vote to get this approved. Council member Spratlin made a motion to approve the final reading of the decorum ordinance. Motion failed due to no second.

**Bowman Elementary School Gym:** Councilwoman Clark stated that since the school and gym were purchased by the City of Bowman. The Sharing and Caring Outreach ministry Inc. has been using the gym for the monthly food pantry to serve the citizens of Bowman and Elbert County. Councilwoman Clark shared the estimated annual budget for the operation of the gym based on figures taken from invoices at city hall. (see attached). Based on the estimated budget and what the gym is being used for, and its potential, Councilwoman Clark made a motion to sell the gym to the Elbert County Planning Committee Incorporated. Motion failed for a lack of a second. The mayor stated that the city could not just sell the gym, the city would have to sell the entire school and gym. Discussion was had. No decisions made.

**Medlink Storage Space/Rental:** Council member Spratlin stated, after reviewing the storage space, he found only half of the building is being used by the Medlink. The other side can be rented out if the city wants to take the money to fix the electricity and other features needing repairs. Discussion was had. No decisions were made.

**Base Gas rates:** Mayor Harpold explained that the only rate change is the base rate, which has nothing to do with how much is used per month. The new rates would be for residential 16.00 dollars and commercials would be 20 dollars. The previous rates were $9.50 for residential and commercial. Motion was made by Councilmember Spratlin to increase the Gas base rate to 16 for residential and 20 for commercial. 2nd by Councilwoman Clark. Councilwoman Clark asked to postpone the increase until April 2025. Motion was amended by Council Spratlin to increase gas base rates for commercial and residential starting in April 2025, 2nd by Councilwoman Clark. The mayor called for a vote by show of hands. Motion passed unanimously.

**Ordinance for Dawn to Dusk in City Park**: The Mayor explained the need for the dusk to dawn ordinance in the park to cut down on vandalism and noise. He suggested working with the attorneys to write this up. He called for discussion from the council. Discussion ensued. Council Woman Maxwell reminded Mayor Harpold that the city cannot use a “Dawn to Dusk” rule on a public road; it cannot be closed. No decisions made.

**Big Iron Crank Up Alcohol Sales.:** Mayor Harpold explained that now that a beer and wine ordinance was in place in Bowman, the ordinance states a non-profit can sell during events for two days with a permit from the city. A request was made by the Special Events Committee to be able to sell beer and wine during the festival. Discussion ensued among council members. Council Woman Maxwell stated that alcohol does not need to be sold where children will be present; they do not need to see intoxicated citizens. The request was tabled to allow for more research.

**New Committee Placement:** Mayor Harpold assigned each council member to their new committee with a brief explanation of duties: 1. **Budget, finance, and audit committee** (Helps monitor budgets and audits) headed by Leah Carey. 2**. Licenses, inspections, and zoning** (working with Bureau Veritas and following ordinances) headed by Betty Jo Maxwell. 3**. Parks and Recreation** (works to improve parks, city streets and repairs, etc.) headed by Jeff Spratlin. 4. **Economic Community Development** (Helps with the library, community buildings, and working with citizens searching for jobs, or resources) headed by Mary M. Clark. 5**. Special Events** (monitoring community events, newsletter etc.) headed by Henrietta Williams. Discussion was had regarding these appointments.

**Mayor Report:** The mayor discussed that he spoke with the auditor. The auditor is hoping to have the audit finished in 3 weeks. The municipal court is still being worked on. The city has a person interested in filling the judge position working on fine details with the attorneys. More information to come regarding the municipal court.

# Council member Reports:

 **Councilwoman Carey:** Nothing to report

**Councilwoman Williams:** Not in attendance

**Councilman Spratlin:**  Spoke on the road paving that is in process. Currently the city has a total of 8 road repaving projects scheduled. Projects are: 1. Roosevelt/Jackson 2. East Church 3. Adams 4. Park & Prince 5. East Ginn & Berryman 6. West Ginn & College 7. Seagar 8. East Hendricks & Seymore. Total budget for these projects is $566,291.00. Total spent to date: $431,970.00. Another project in the works is replacing the manhole/ water risers and striping the newly paved roads. The projected total for this is $12,500.00. Based on projections, all projects should finish under budget at $521,910.00. Council member Spratlin also thanked the city works for staying on top of the projects and getting things in place. Council member Spratlin informed everyone that the city would be having an auction for several different items that were no longer of use to the city. Dates and times for the auction will be announced at a later date.

**Councilwoman Clark:** Councilwoman Clark expressed her delight in the streets being paved and how everyone worked together to get this done. Councilwoman Clark read a report for January 2024 through December 2024 on the Bowman Food Pantry. Total number of families served: 696. Total cost for the year was: $1,832.00.

**Councilwoman Maxwell:** Stated she attended the development committee meeting in Elberton and the meeting went well. She also expressed that she would like to work on getting the cemetery repaved and potholes fixed.

**Attorney Report**: nothing to report.

**Hospital Authority:** see attached

**Moratorium:** Discussion ensued. Councilwoman Clark asked Attorney Williams to speak on the moratorium. The majority of council members do not agree on a moratorium to halt the building of structures.

**Speakers:**

**Mr. Greg Cunningham**: expressed concerns about the spring festival being in the park. He also said that the paving job done at Roosevelt Circle was not done properly.

 **Marget Thornton 139 Roosevelt Circle:** Mrs. Thornton explained she had been informed of the danger of having concrete around her gas meter and was looking for solutions.

**John Clark 224 S. Segars Street:** Expressed his concerns about vandalism at the Elementary School and the gym if the city doesn’t start using the building. He also asked that the chosen investor, if the city decides to sell the school and gym have Bowman’s best interest in mind.

**Sherilee (address unknown):** stated she enjoyed the festivals and hoped the city would continue to have them.

**Angie Harpold 189 West Railroad Street:** read a statement requesting to know why at every meeting there a request for an apology, but no request for changes or votes for changes in the city or actions to help the city become better or fix issues that are already in place.

**George Snider:** addressed recent rumors regarding his business. He also stated that his business is here to serve the city and is willing to help in any way.

The mayor asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Council member Spratlin to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Council Woman Clark. The mayor called for a vote by show of hands. Motion passed unanimously.

**Meeting Adjourned**