



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING  
WORK SESSION  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 – 6:35 PM  
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

David Eady – Mayor  
George Holt – Councilmember  
Jim Windham – Councilmember  
Lynn Bohanan – Councilmember  
Laura McCanless – Councilmember  
Avis Williams – Councilmember  
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer  
Bill Andrew – City Manager  
Dave Harvey – Chief of Police  
Jody Reid – Utilities/Maintenance  
Supervisor

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Art Vinson, Mike Ready, Cheryl Ready, Robert Renwick (Keck & Wood)

**Agenda** (Attachment A)

**1. Mayor's Announcements**

Mayor Eady did not have any announcements.

**2. Committee Reports**

**a. Trees, Parks, and Recreation Board**

Cheryl Ready stated that the board is asking residents if they are interested in participating in the free giveaway of trees to revitalize the tree canopy on Emory Street.

Laura McCanless added that she and Theresa Eady are also collecting bids from providers in Atlanta that will remove invasive species from land in a sensitive manner without heavy chemical use. When they receive one final bid, they will formulate a proposal to present to the City Council.

Mayor Eady asked Ms. McCanless if they had checked into the Chew Crew. She advised they had not obtained a bid from them. The information she has gotten concerning goat and sheep clean-up is that they eat everything, including the beneficial plants and small trees. They want to avoid depleting the beneficial items if possible. Also, the invasive plant species will come right back.

- b. Planning Commission – Mike Ready stated that the Planning Commission plans to discuss the final draft of the ordinance amendments they had recommended at their next meeting.
- c. Downtown Development Authority (DDA) – Mike Ready stated that they will be looking at some quotes for making improvements to the greenspace at their next meeting.
- d. Sustainability Committee – Laura McCanless reported the committee is doing some research on recycling alternatives with the goal of decreasing the overall carbon footprint.
- e. Committee on Race – Avis Williams reported that the committee members are participating in the symposium presented by Emory next week. She will forward the link to register to the City Councilmembers.
- f. Cemetery Committee – Lynn Bohanan stated that Anderson Wright has two proposals for care of the cemetery. She advised that the Schneiders are not interested in rebidding. Mayor Eady stated that the bids he has are ones that were obtained by Matt Pepper earlier this year, and probably need to be refreshed. The recommendation is to let the current contract run out in December 2021 and start with the new contract in January 2022.

### 3. **Emory Street Sidewalk Improvements** (Attachment B)

The City of Oxford plans to add sidewalks and a mid-block crossing with a rapid-flashing beacon on the north side of the City along Highway 81/Emory Street. Robert Renwick from Keck & Wood has worked on draft construction drawings for this project. He presented an overview of the construction drawings.

The project also includes pedestrian lighting. Mr. Renwick recommends that the lighting used on this project become a standard for lighting throughout the City. Mayor Eady stated that one desired goal with the lighting is that light spillage beyond the pedestrian area would be minimized. He also mentioned that the City's lighting should be distinctive from the lighting on the Oxford College campus. The Oxford College lighting is also taller than the lighting desired for this project. Mayor Eady asked Mr. Renwick to provide some recommendations for the City Council to select from.

Laura McCanless asked if there are options for how long the lighting stays on. Specifically, is it motion sensitive, or does it come on at a certain time and stay on? Ideally, it would be motion-sensitive rather than staying on all night to minimize disturbance to wildlife and reduce energy usage and would not be triggered by vehicle traffic – only by pedestrian traffic. Mr. Renwick advised he would investigate the options available and include that information in the design drawings.

Ms. McCanless and Lynn Bohanan asked why the crossing is oriented in the middle of the block and not closer to the cemetery and park. Mr. Renwick explained that the crossing is placed where it is to connect with an existing trail leading to the park, and that placement of the crossing further south would require a bridge to cross over a swampy area to get to the park. He also stated that when a highway does not have a stop control at an intersection, it

is preferred to move the crossing away from that intersection (Collingsworth Street/Emory Way) so that drivers have time to turn onto the highway and make visual contact with the flashing beacons and the pedestrians in the crossing.

Lynn Bohanan stated she is unsure about having the crossing come into a wooded area. Mayor Eady stated the current plan would result in minimal disturbance to the land.

Jim Windham asked for clarification on the statement about the intersection. He expressed concern that engineering efforts are being channeled toward accommodating vehicles instead of accommodating pedestrians. He feels that children who want to cross will do it closer to Emory Way rather than walk to the crossing that is planned for mid-block.

Mr. Renwick disagreed that placing the crossing mid-block is accommodating vehicles. He reiterated that this placement is safer for pedestrians because it allows drivers more time to see pedestrians crossing after they turn onto Highway 81. He also indicated that he doubts if the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) would approve the crossing closer to Emory Way/Collingsworth Street.

Lynn Bohanan stated that when drivers turn on to Highway 81 from Emory Way, they are going to be focused on increasing speed to the flow of traffic and will have to stop suddenly for the crossing. Mayor Eady stated that they will see the flashing light as soon as they turn.

Laura McCanless stated that the bottom line is a crosswalk is needed for the park patrons in this area, and if the proposed design is what GDOT will approve, the City should not waste time discussing alternate designs that GDOT will not approve.

Art Vinson questioned the rationale of placing the crosswalk nearer to the cemetery rather than nearer to the pavilion and playground, since people using it would be more likely headed toward the pavilion and playground. He suggested moving the crosswalk further south. This change would also provide more room to make visual contact with the rapid-flash beacons and pedestrians after turning from Collingsworth Street and Emory Way onto Highway 81.

Mayor Eady advised that moving the crosswalk further south would increase the complexity of the project because the ground is soft and wet between Collingsworth Street and the park. Mr. Vinson stated this disadvantage could be turned into a feature by using catwalks to navigate the swampy area.

Jeff Wearing asked if Mr. Renwick could provide some alternatives that he believes GDOT will approve. He agrees with Mr. Vinson that safety of children crossing is the most important thing, even if it increases the cost of the project.

Mr. Renwick stated there may be options to move the crosswalk further south. He will study these options and provide additional recommendations. He advised that temporary easements will be needed in a couple of places at driveways and on slopes. Formal

easements are not necessary; these can be rights of entry agreements with the property owners.

Mayor Eady asked Mr. Renwick to update the project schedule. He knows there has been some project slippage and would like more accurate information on when the request for bids should go out and when construction should begin. Mr. Renwick will update the schedule and add some risks and a critical path.

4. **MEAG Power Resolution for Municipal Competitive Trust Fund** (Attachment C)  
Oxford identifies two independent City officials by resolution to communicate decisions of the City regarding its Municipal Competitive Trust Fund. In 2020, Mayor David Eady and City Manager Matthew Pepper were identified as the two City officials. Since Matthew Pepper is no longer employed with the City of Oxford, the resolution must be updated. In consultation with MEAG, the City proposes replacing specific names on this document with titles so that it does not require updating each time the person in the position changes.

No concerns were raised by the Councilmembers.

5. **MEAG 2022 Capacity Needs** (Attachment D)  
The City of Oxford has been advised by MEAG that it has a capacity shortage for 2022 of 907 kw (484 kw Reserve and 485 kw Supplemental). The City of Elberton has agreed to sell capacity at a negotiated rate of \$6/kw-yr. for Reserve Capacity and \$8/kw-yr. for Supplemental Capacity. Market rates are \$9.54 and \$15.38 respectively. The total cost would be \$6,784 [(484 kw x \$6) + (485 kw x \$8)].

Mayor Eady stated MEAG shops around for the best rates for cities that have a capacity shortage and brokers those deals. The rates offered by the City of Elberton are favorable compared to the market rates. He also stated that that once the solar portion of our portfolio comes online, the City should not have an annual shortage.

No concerns were raised by the Councilmembers.

6. **Oxford Police Department Body Camera Storage Process** (Attachment E)  
The Oxford Police Department currently stores body camera footage on external hard drives. The current upload process for the footage is time consuming and cumbersome, and speed of upload is contingent upon an officer being available to perform the process. The Police Department has received a proposal from the vendor of their cameras for a 60-month agreement to provide cloud storage for body camera footage.

The storage process is proprietary to the brand of cameras and using a different storage service would require purchase of new cameras. Therefore, competitive bids cannot be obtained for this service without replacement of the cameras, which is not necessary at this time. Installation costs are \$1,563.00 and there is a recurring annual cost of \$1,392.00 for 60 months. Chief Harvey recommends approval of the contract. The installation costs include setup of the chargers for the cameras and training in use of the software.

Laura McCanless asked how old the Police Department's cameras are and if they will last through the five-year contract. She also asked how the company is rated. Chief Harvey stated that the company is Axon Enterprises, and they provide most of the cameras in use today. The company also supplies Oxford's tasers. They have had one or two cameras break down, but Axon has been good about working with Oxford within the warranty.

Ms. McCanless asked if the application will support new cameras if any new ones must be bought. Chief Harvey stated it is a simple process to add new cameras to the application.

Ms. McCanless asked if the company has provisions for a backup of the camera footage. Mayor Eady stated that most cloud storage services have redundancies in place. City Attorney David Strickland has also reviewed the contract and had no concerns about it.

George Holt stated that he saw some language about tasers but saw nothing about body cameras in the terms of the contract. After further review, it was determined that this language is referring to the licensing products, and the license Oxford is getting is for Axon Evidence. The terms are all-encompassing to cover all of Axon's products.

**7. Purchase of 47' Derrick Truck for Public Works Department (Attachment F)**

The FY 2021 Capital Budget includes funds for replacement of the Public Works' derrick truck. Bids were received from two vendors. Availability of vendors for this product is very limited. Staff recommends awarding the contract for this equipment to Altec, the low bidder, for \$207,290. Delivery of the truck will take approximately one year, so the order needs to be placed since there are already mechanical problems with the current equipment.

Jody Reid explained that this equipment is the City's line truck that is used to set poles and remove trees that have fallen on lines. It is also used to set transformers. It is about thirty years old, was purchased in used condition, and has had some major work. The turntable and main boom need rebuilding, which are very costly repairs. It is dangerous to use without repairs.

George Holt asked when the City started setting its own poles, as he was under the impression the City contracts this work out. Mr. Reid stated that the City sets poles anytime they are broken by storm damage, and they set poles for new service.

Mayor Eady stated that the City Council can vote on the purchase in October as a formality but can go ahead and order it since the current equipment is dangerous. The cost has increased since the bid was obtained for the Capital budget. Marcia Brooks stated that the City will not pay for the equipment until next fiscal year, so a budget amendment may not be needed for the current fiscal year.

**8. Replacement of Gutter Guards at City Hall (Attachment G)**

It was recently discovered that the gutter guards installed on the City Hall building when it was built are rotten and need to be replaced. Staff has obtained three bids for performance of this work and recommends that the City contract with the low bidder, KJGR, LLC, for \$5,400.00 to complete this work using Leaf Blaster products.

Laura McCanless stated that the product is aluminum with stainless steel perforated mesh and ribbing to allow leaves to run off.

**9. Other Business**

No other business was raised.

**10. Work Session Meeting Review**

- a. Emory Street Sidewalk Improvements – Robert Renwick with Keck & Wood to provide additional options for crosswalk alignment, lighting options, and project schedule update
- b. MEAG Power Resolution for MCT Fund – vote in October regular session
- c. MEAG 2022 Capacity Needs – vote in October regular session
- d. Oxford Police Department Body Camera Storage Process – vote in October regular session
- e. Purchase of 47' Derrick Truck for Public Works Department – vote in October regular session
- f. Replacement of Gutter Guards at City Hall – vote in October regular session

**11. Executive Session**

The City Council entered Executive Session at 7:55 p.m. to discuss real estate matters.

The City Council adjourned from Executive Session at 8:01 p.m.

**12. Adjourn**

**Mayor Eady adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Brooks  
City Clerk/Treasurer