

**CITY OF TEMPLE MINUTES
TEMPLE CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2009 – 6:30 PM
TEMPLE CITY HALL**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Ford called the special called meeting of the Temple City Council to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present constituting a quorum: Councilmember Richard Bracknell, Councilmember Larry Estvanko, Councilmember Larry Mann; Councilmember Hiley Miller and Councilmember William Simmons.

INVOCATION: The invocation was given by Rev. Nathan Harper

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

Mayor Ford opened the floor for citizen's comments.

Linda Walden, 440 Centerpoint Road, spoke and asked question on the synopsis for the agenda items, Air Cards for the police department, Handicap Ramp for the drug store, Employee Recognition and Recommendation to change the Budget to a Cash Flow Budget.

Penny Ransom, 922 Creek Run Place, spoke and asked questions on the rules of decorum, the agenda, can any council member amend the agenda item prior to the council meeting, air cards and handicap ramp.

CONSENT AGENDA:

After discussion on the budget and sending the Moratorium on training back to Finance Committee Simmons motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented; seconded by Miller. The motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1.) **Air Cards for Police Department:** After discussion; Estvanko made a motion to send back to the Finance Committee; seconded by Simmons. Motion carried 5-0
- 2.) **Handicap Ramp:** After discussion; the Handicapped Ramp was tabled and sent to committee for Legal review.
- 3.) **Employee Recognition for years of Service to the City of Temple:** After discussion; Mann made a motion to approve; seconded by Estvanko. Motion carried 5-0

4.) **Adopting the Resolution of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Temple:** After discussion Hiley made a motion to adopt the resolution as amended; seconded by Bracknell. Motion carried 5-0

5.) **Changing February Committee Meeting Date:** After discussion Estvanko made a motion to change the February Committee meeting from the 4th Monday to the 3rd Monday; seconded by Miller. Motion carried 5-0

MAYOR AND COUNCIL CLOSING COMMENTS:

Council Member Larry Estvanko: made a suggestion on the Committee Meetings when we have guest speakers that come and give us information after the information is relinquished from the guest would it be possible for audience and council to ask questions. After the guest leaves council does not have the benefit of asking questions. He also spoke with Council Member Richard Bracknell about this and wanted input from the other Council Members.

Council Member Larry Mann: Received a phone call from a citizen stating that they had a letter about a Temple publication in the newspapers all over the country and outside the country and Canada. After spending a lot of time on the internet researching this claim trying to find newspapers in Ontario Canada, Arizona and California Mr. Mann could not find it. In talking to the Star Reporter during an interview about this the reporter stated he could not find the publication either that it was a news release from Bel Air. However, he checked on Temple, Georgia and it was all over. Mr. Mann stated maybe that is not as bad as a newspaper but it is a lot of publicity. Mr. Mann addresses the Chief and stated that he believes the Chiefs intent was to endorse this company's equipment however; he was concerned about the information that was on the web site. Mr. Mann agreed with the Chamber when they stated that this gives a real bad light to the city as stated in a newspaper article.

In January we had a budget problem that could have said we would delay the budget but we told why and it was said all the purchases would be reviewed against the inventory sheets submitted by the Chief. All of that was delivered to the paper as well. The paper made us look pretty bad and if the Chief has a good relationship with the company they need to run a website that states this information was inaccurate and when you click on Temple, Georgia it says..... date, news release with inaccurate information. As far as the money is concerned it has been discussed and will be discussed more later.

Council Member Williams Simmons: Discussed budget issues with the police department

Council Member Richard Bracknell: Discussed a couple of issues that have been brought to his attention. Mr. Bracknell would like to publically state facts regarding an incident on Wednesday, January 27, 2009 at approximately 2pm after reviewing documents and procedures at the police station he went to City Hall. He walked into the lobby and was met by the City Administrator who told him that there were 2 Council Members in the building and his presence might be interpreted as being a quorum. Mr. Bracknell left the City Hall and told the City Administrator to call him when one of the other Council Members left. He returned to the City Hall after the call stating one of the other Council Members had left. He was then confronted by a person about the illegal meetings supposedly taking place. Mr. Bracknell responded that no such meetings were taking place. The individual stated that it was all over town that they were meeting illegally and he had been called in to investigate. Mr. Bracknell wants the people of Temple to rest assured that they are guaranteed transparency. The scrutiny of the City was

confirmed by the quick action of the person called to investigate this supposed illegal meeting. The three Council Members were never in the same room. He states he appreciated the person's willingness to come and investigate but also note that this is an example of close scrutiny of the City Hall.

Transparency is also confirmed by the many open records that are honored regularly. This month alone there were 23 open records requests. In the past several months the City has been reported to the Attorney General, the GBI, the District Attorney, the EPD as well as the Federal Agencies as noted in a recent news article. WSB TV has visited the city on two occasions. Numerous articles and editorials printed in local newspapers. There are hundreds of photographs and videos. Every action, decision, plan, brain storming session brings an array of accusations and open record requests.

Mr. Bracknell realizes and encourages that during important decision proceedings the citizens of Temple must be given a voice to depoliticize and encourage during these important decision proceedings it would greatly change the environment if these suggestions and ideas could be presented in a constructive manor.

This is our community and we all love it. But the constant hostility can and will hurt us economically if it continues. We have a wonderful opportunity for growth and development when the economy improves.

Mr. Bracknell called for greater cooperation and community service to make our city evolve and reach its fullest potential.

At the end of Mr. Bracknell's closing comments he was interrupted by Ms. Linda Walden who was then told she had not been recognized and was removed by the Chief of Police for disrupting the Council Meeting.

CITY OF TEMPLE ATTORNEY CYNTHIA DALEY: Ms. Daley wanted to make a closing comment for the benefit for the Mayor and Council and the citizens of Temple as well. At this time the evidence that was presented to the Carroll County Grand Jury was presented by the Georgia Bureau of Investigations and the District Attorney's office regarding certain matters involving the City of Temple. The City, its employees and elected officials openly welcomed the investigation and provided all information and documents requested during the investigation. Following the presentment this last week the grand jury found the allegations made against the City, its officials and its employees not to rise to any suggestions of criminal activity. However, the Grand Jury did urge the City's officials and the citizens of Temple to work together to build stronger relationships to serve the needs of the City and its citizens.

The city, Mayor and Council themselves recognized a number of its policies, procedures and accounting processes were outdated and have adopted procedures for the handling of cash receipts; which created accountability and documentation. They are also in the process of drafting and adopting a new employee handbook. They have moved to a time clock system in order to ensure proper documentation and hours worked. Hired a new Code enforcement officer to ensure ordinances are followed. WE have a new City Administrator to oversee the day to day operations. The City has implemented a Committee System to allow for more public input.

The Mayor and Council will continue its efforts to eliminate outdated policies and procedures and welcome input through the Committee meetings which are held the last Monday of each month at 5pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Bracknell motioned to adjourn at 7:40 pm in order to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel, legal, and real estate; seconded by Miller. The motion carries 5-0.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION: Bracknell motioned to return to regular session at 9:00 p.m.; seconded by Miller. The motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to discuss; Miller motioned to adjourn at 9:05 pm; seconded by Simmons. The motion carries 5-0.

Rick Ford - Mayor

Attest:

Angie Williams – City Clerk