

MINUTES
CITY OF MAULDIN
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 18, 2022

Members present: Mayor Terry Merritt, Councilmembers Taft Matney, Carol King, Jason Kraeling, Michael Reynolds, Frank Allgood, and Diane Kuzniar.

Others present: Acting City Administrator David Dyrhaug, and City Attorney Daniel Hughes

1. Call to Order- Mayor Merritt
 - a. Welcome- Mayor Merritt
 - b. Invocation- Councilman Matney
 - c. Pledge of Allegiance- Councilman Matney
2. Proclamations and Presentations- No proclamations or presentations
3. Reading and Approval of Minutes
 - a. City Council Meeting –June 20, 2022- Mayor Merritt asked that one change be made. With that, the minutes were approved by consent.
 - b. Special Called Meeting- June 22, 2022 – The minutes were approved by consent.
 - c. Special Called Meeting-July 5, 2022

Motion: Councilman Matney made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed. Councilwoman King seconded the motion.

Mayor Merritt and Councilman Reynolds were not present at the July 5th meeting and will not vote on the minutes.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (5-0).

4. Public Comment

One person signed up to speak and make a short presentation.

Motion: Councilman Matney made a motion to suspend the rules to allow the public comment at the beginning of the meeting even though the subject was not on the Council agenda. Councilman Reynolds seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

Susan McLarty: I am Susan McLarty and am with the Greenville Homeless Alliance. Our office is inside United Ministries, at 606 Pendleton Street downtown Greenville, 29601. It is my pleasure to be here and I appreciate your service. We have been taking our newest report to the different municipalities and I wanted to briefly share a few items with you. We were at Simpsonville’s meeting last week and their Mayor said he was left feeling more comfortable about something that could sometimes feel a little overwhelming.

We hope you will take a minute to review the report. We are a coalition of partners working together to make community members aware. Please let me know if there is any way in the future we can be helpful to you.

I was pleased to be with you last week at the grand opening of Olii Place. That was one of the days you wish you could have every day, because then I would work myself out of a job. We did put together a summary of the report that helps you understand some data available from Greenville County. We have 3281 unique individuals that have experienced homelessness in the 2019-2020 year. Just to give you a quick synopsis, and some exciting news that has come about since we were established in 2018, is that the first number are all the people who flowed through about 460 beds. You will often hear Ryan Duerk, who runs Miracle Hill, say we don't need more shelter beds, we need more exits from emergency shelters. The next number represents a one-night count that HUD mandates all communities across the country conduct each January. We realize the number is much higher, but this is the data we received from people who stayed outside or in a place unfit for human habitation. The third number is your school age children. They would likely be our largest number. This does not include their parents or any siblings that are not school age children and would not be reported by Greenville County Schools. One takeaway is the definition for Greenville County Schools is in line with HUD. That means for Greenville County we are able to serve less than 10% of those students and their parents.

I noticed Councilmember Matney and Councilmember Allgood are both connected with Mauldin High through the Student Improvement Council. I think it is important takeaway that if we as a community really want to make a difference, if we want to serve more families, we would provide more local resources to address homelessness. Mauldin Middle, Mauldin High, and Bethel Elementary, and you will see 86 schools did report one or more students experiencing homelessness. We have gotten the most recent numbers if you are interested in seeing that, which unfortunately, are continuing to trend upward.

In closing, I just want to mention two more things. We were able to give some thoughts back in 2020 when the Deluxe Inn was condemned. We do have a motel response plan if anyone wants to take a look at that. And we have a really great strategic plan, which you could find on our website. I want to give a shoutout to Mauldin's very own Addy Matney, who worked with our steering committee to help develop our strategic plan. We were really excited to have her experience and expertise to make a strong plan that we are now working to implement.

Councilman Matney said several years ago, a group he has been involved with worked to make sure the backpack program for the elementary schools were stocked so that kids who knew school was their only certain source of food, would not be the only source, as they had food to take home with them on the weekends. A social worker that works at a school with older children brought up that there is a substantial homeless population in our City of older teenagers. He would like us to have that population on our hearts as well.

5. Report from City Administrator- None

Maria Godfrey was present from First Step Realty and represented the Mauldin Chamber. She has watched her neighbors, Councilwoman King and Councilman Allgood do things in Mauldin. Council has helped grow Mauldin to be the Number 1 City in South Carolina to raise a family. The Chamber is asking for Council support and asking for participation in Chamber-sponsored events. She would like the Council to acknowledge and recognize the Chamber.

6. Report from Standing Committees

- a. Finance and Policy (Chairperson Reynolds)- None
- b. Public Safety (Chairperson King)- Chairwoman King reported that the Police Department is conducting the Youth Academy this year and the graduation is Friday.
- c. Public Works (Chairperson Kraeling)- None
- d. Economic Planning & Development (Chairperson Matney)- Chairman Matney introduced JR Charles as the new Community Development Director.
- e. Building Codes (Chairperson Kuzniar)- Seven new businesses opened this month.
- f. Recreation (Chairperson Allgood)- None

7. Unfinished Business- There is no unfinished business.

8. New Business

Standing Committee Items

a. Purchase and Sale Agreement

Motion: Councilman Matney made a motion to hold this item on the floor until the parties work out details. Councilman Reynolds seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

9. Public Comment- None

10. Council Concerns

Councilwoman King said before Ms. Godfrey started her business, she was a broker for someone else. Councilwoman King met with Ms. Godfrey, where she explained her passion for Mauldin. Ms. Godfrey did not look anywhere else when she located her business here, and is a proud Mauldin business owner.

Councilwoman Kuzniar said she had takeaways from the Municipal Association meeting. When people work together courageously, their potential is unlimited. Also, Council needs to be open minded and to make sure people feel they are being heard when they attend Council meetings.

Mayor Merritt mentioned the ribbon cutting at Ollie Place that was held last week. Ollie is a Cherokee word meaning friendship. Mauldin has been inclusive in offering housing to all people.

The City has a great relationship with the Chamber. He asked Council to make every effort to attend the Business After Hours and ribbon cuttings and support the Chamber. There is a ribbon cutting on Friday, at the same time Council will be in a special called Council meeting. He will ask for a staff representative to attend.

WSPA is airing segments about Mauldin on Friday, every half an hour, from 5:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. The Police Department, Fire Department, therapy dog Margo, and Bridgeway Station will all be featured.

11. Adjournment- Mayor Merritt adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cindy Miller
Municipal Clerk