



**CITY OF TOCCOA**  
**CITY COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES • JANUARY 8, 2024**

**Regular Meeting**

**City Commission/Court Room**

**5:00 PM**

92 North Alexander, Toccoa, GA 30577

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of January 8, 2024 was called to order by Mayor Gail Fry at 5:00 pm.

**INVOCATION**

The Invocation was given by Pastor Paul Garrison

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

**ROLL CALL**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Terry Carter	Vice Mayor	Present	
Gail Fry	Mayor	Present	
Evan Hellenga	Commissioner	Present	
Ron Matheson	Commissioner	Present	
Michelle Jamieson	Commissioner	Present	
Fredda O. Wheeler	City Manager	Present	
John Dickerson	Attorney	Present	
Beth Rider	City Clerk	Present	

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Matheson and unanimously carried to approve the agenda with amendments to add Real Estate to be discussed at the Executive Session and to continue discussion of Tugalo Street Greenspace.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED WITH AMENDMENT [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Terry Carter, Vice Mayor
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

**REPORTS**

Mayor Gail Fry welcomed City Manager Fredda Wheeler, City Clerk Beth Rider and Commissioner Ron Matheson to their first official meeting.

Mayor Gail Fry stated the Emancipation Proclamation Service had a great turnout and a great program.

City Manager Fredda Wheeler stated Stephens County Schools will be closed on Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>.

**I. CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Matheson and unanimously carried to approve consent agenda.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Terry Carter, Vice Mayor
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

- A. Request for Approval of Minutes of December 11, 2023 Work Session
- B. Request for Approval of Minutes of December 11, 2023 Commission Meeting
- C. Request for Approval of Minutes of December 28, 2023 Special Called Meeting

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

- D. Executive Session to Discuss a Personnel Matter

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Jamieson and unanimously approved to enter into Executive Session.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson, seconded by Commissioner Matheson and unanimously approved to adjourn Executive Session.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hellenga, seconded by Commissioner Matheson and unanimously approved to reconvene regular meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hellenga, seconded by Vice Mayor Carter and unanimously approved to approve employment contract with City Manager Wheeler.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Terry Carter, Vice Mayor
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Michelle Jamieson, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

- E. Audit Presentation by Mauldin and Jenkins

A presentation of audit results was given by Mauldin & Jenkins Auditor. The report consisted of a clean audit result.

- F. Ratification of Mayor and Vice Mayor Elections

A motion was made by Commissioner Hellenga, seconded by Commissioner Jamieson and unanimously approved to ratify the election of Mayor Gail Fry and Vice Mayor Terry Carter.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Evan Hellenga, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Michelle Jamieson, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

- G. Appointments by the Mayor

A motion was made by Commissioner Matheson, seconded by Vice Mayor Carter and unanimously approved to accept the following board appointments.

- Humane Shelter - Commissioners Hellenga and Carter
- Toccoa-Stephens County Chamber of Commerce - Commissioner Matheson
- Stephens County Development Authority - Mayor Fry
- Downtown Development Authority - Vice Mayor Carter
- Georgia Mountain Regional Commission Board - Vice Mayor Carter
- Airport Authority - Mayor Fry
- Stephens County Board of Health - Mayor Fry
- Historic Preservation Commission Liaison - Vice Mayor Carter
- Keep Toccoa-Stephens County Beautiful - Commissioner Jamieson
- Rural Conservation and Development Council Board - Commissioners Hellenga and Jamieson
- Alcohol Beverage Control Board - Mae Brown-Orr

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Terry Carter, Vice Mayor
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

- Humane Shelter Committee (2 Appointments)
- Toccoa-Stephens County Chamber of Commerce
- Stephens County Development Authority (Mayor Serves)
- Downtown Development Authority
- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Board
- Airport Authority
- Stephens County Board of Health
- Historic Preservation Commission Liaison
- Keep Toccoa-Stephens County Beautiful Board
- Rural Conservation and Development Council Board

H. Consideration of Appointments to the Board of Ethics Panel

A motion was made by Commissioner Matheson, seconded by Vice Mayor Carter and unanimously approve to following appointments to the Board of Ethics for a two year term ending December 31, 2025.

- Inger Neal
- Gary Cortellino

Bill Ayers  
Gary Bellamy  
Rick Ayers

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Terry Carter, Vice Mayor
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

I. Consideration of GEFA Loan Modification

A motion was made by Commissioner Hellenga, seconded by Commissioner Jamieson and unanimously approved to approve GEFA loan modification.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Evan Hellenga, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Michelle Jamieson, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

J. Consideration of GEFA Loan Application

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson, seconded by Vice Mayor Carter and unanimously approved to approve GEFA loan application.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Michelle Jamieson, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Terry Carter, Vice Mayor
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

K. Consideration of 2024 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program Funds

A motion was made by Commissioner Hellenga, seconded by Commissioner Matheson and unanimously approved to approve 2024 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program funds to be banked for future projects for three years.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Evan Hellenga, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson, Jamieson

L. Continue Work Session Discussion on Tugalo Greenspace

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Matheson and approved to move forward with the Tugalo Street Greenspace Project. Commissioner Jamieson abstained.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Hellenga and approved to pay \$14,900.00 out of SPLOST for additional paving and authorize to pay Thomason Construction. Commissioner Jamieson abstained.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Matheson and approved to take \$7,769.00 from Community Development Professional Fees for Engineering review and place in the special account Finance has set up.

Vice Mayor Carter stated he would also like to move the following amounts to be set up in the special account.

\$2,500 from Contract Labor

\$1,000 from Community Development Awards & Recognition

\$2,000 from Currahee Street Greenspace Project

\$15,000 from Currahee Street Greenspace Grant Program

\$2,500 from Main Street signage

\$1,735 from Main Street Supplies & Material

Commissioner Jamieson abstained. Commissioner Jamieson stated she did not vote for these motions or the project because there are too many if's involved.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [4 TO 0]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Terry Carter, Vice Mayor
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Evan Hellenga, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Carter, Fry, Hellenga, Matheson
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	Jamieson

M. Monthly Financial Report

Financial Report presented by Finance Director Becky Bohannon.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PRESENTATION</b>
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**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Recognition of Visitors Wishing to Speak on General Items. (Limit 3 Minutes)

**V. ADJOURN**

January 8, 2024 meeting was adjourned by Mayor Gail Fry.

*Gail Fry*  
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 Mayor

*Beth Rider*  
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 City Clerk