



**CITY OF TOCCOA  
CITY COMMISSION  
MINUTES • MAY 21, 2024**

**Regular Meeting**

**City Commission/Court Room**

**5:00 PM**

92 North Alexander, Toccoa, GA 30577

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Mayor Gail Fry called the regular meeting to order.

**INVOCATION**

Reverend Paul Garrison gave the invocation.

**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 Commissioner Hellenga, seconded by Vice-Mayor Carter to approve the agenda.

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

**REPORTS**

Commissioner Hellenga reported a successful Toast of Toccoa on Saturday and thanked Jeremy, Kristen and Misty. Commissioner Hellenga reported Saturday night was the last of the Night at the Ritz and we had a packed house.

Vice-Mayor Carter reported after tonight's meeting at 5:30 pm the Animal Shelter Board will be meeting.

Mayor Fry reported she attended the Development Authority meeting they are working hard to promote our community throughout our State and Nation. Mayor Fry commended them for working so well with our students in the school system. They get the students out in the work force in the industries and they find a career they love.

Mayor Fry thanked the staff for a great Toast of Toccoa event.

Commissioner Matheson thanked the staff for a successful Toast of Toccoa. Commissioner Matheson reported he attended the Robert Knox Municipal Leadership training at UGA and this morning attended the May Chamber Board meeting.

Commissioner Jamieson stated she has not attended any meetings the last few weeks but would like to follow up on our last work session meeting where we asked the Humane Shelter Board to reconsider their vote on their Director. Commissioner Jamieson stated based on the information provided to her and what was asked of the Shelter Board to do and what was stated about following up and starting on June 1st; Commissioner Jamieson asked the board to direct the Finance Director to withhold up to \$3,000 a month from the Shelters budget to amend the 2023-2024 budget and continue through the 2024-2025 budget or until this is resolved.

Commissioner Jamieson made the motion to direct the Finance Director to withhold up to \$3,000 a month from the Shelters budget to amend the 2023-2024 budget and continue through the 2024-2025 budget and stated she would like this to continue until the Shelter Board makes any personnel changes, Vice-Mayor Carter stated he would second the motion for discussion. Mayor Fry stated this is what we said we would do at our last meeting.

Vice-Mayor Carter stated he was curious why \$3,000. Commissioner Jamieson stated she understood the Director's salary is \$5,500 a month; if you take the matching taxes and add to the \$5,500 you get \$6,325 a month the shelter has to pay out for his salary. We don't know if the shelter can provide their third, we don't know if the County has already provided all of their funding this year. If we take it and say up to \$3,000 we should be able to cover at least our third of his salary that is our portion.

Vice-Mayor seconded the motion.

Vice-Mayor Carter stated there may be action taken at the Shelter Board meeting to resolve this and asked if Commissioner Jamieson wanted this in place.

Commissioner Jamieson stated as discussed in our work session we agreed to send a letter, we did not agree with the current situation. If you meet and go into executive session and come out and make changes this is a moot point; if you go into executive session and come out and don't make changes or if you are out voted this makes a valid point. Vice-Mayor Carter stated this will make a stance for the City. Commissioner Jamieson stated we need to make a stance. Vice-Mayor Carter stated regardless, if the City does not give \$3,000 the board is totally separate and they can agree to pay him forever. We are not telling the board to cut his pay or fire him. Commissioner Jamieson stated she did not say that. Commissioner Hellenga stated this is micro managing the shelter. Vice-Mayor Carter stated what we are doing is cutting funding; we don't want to appear like we are forcing someone to resign or quit. Commissioner Jamieson stated no, we are not; we are trying to make a stance for the City. Commissioner Jamieson stated we have an obligation to the public to spend their tax dollars the best way we can, and in this situation she did not feel we are using tax payer dollars to the best of our ability when we are not being proactive. Commissioner Hellenga asked if spending \$2,000,000 on the Ritz expansion is the best use of tax payer dollars. Commissioner Jamieson stated no, she did not but on the other hand you are not paying someone to sit at home. Mayor Fry stated at our last meeting the decision was unanimous that we would send this letter to the Shelter Board, the letter stated if by our meeting today a decision was not made we were going to withhold our funding beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>; at this point that has not happened, are we going back on the letter we wrote? Commissioner Jamieson

stated no, she was not; this affects the 2023-2024 budget and will affect the 2024-2025 budget and why she wants the amendment for the 2023-2024 budget and consideration in the 2024-2025 budget. Vice-Mayor Carter stated Mayor this will make it official, requesting that letter to be written was in a work session and we had consensus and Commissioner Jamieson’s point is well taken, this is a motion to actually do it since we received no response. Commissioner Jamieson stated this is a situation that could go on for years.

The motion was approved 4-1; Commissioner Hellenga voted no.

**I. CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Hellenga, seconded by Vice-Mayor Carter to approve the consent agenda.

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

- A. Request for Approval of Minutes of May 13, 2024 Work Session
- B. Request of Approval of Minutes of May 13, 2024 Commission Meeting

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

- C. Consideration of Alcohol Beverage License for the Farmer and the Butcher Located at 176 N. Pond Street

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Matheson to approve the alcohol license for The Farmer and The Butcher. Motion carried unanimously.

<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

- D. Consideration of the 2024 Local Road Assistance Administration Grant

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson, seconded by Commissioner Hellenga to approve the 2024 Local Road Assistance Grant. Motion carried unanimously.

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

- E. Consideration of City Hall Renovation

City Manager Fredda Wheeler requested the board to approve bids for CJ Mobile Wash for the soft and pressure washing project, Foothills Contracting for installation of lights on

parking deck and Arnold Asphalt Maintenance for the re-stripping of the parking deck. Ms. Wheeler asked the board to allow staff to re-bid the painting project as it is a large financial project and we only received one bid. The bid will be submitted for two weeks.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Carter to approve the requested bids. Motion carried unanimously.

<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

F. Consideration to Reschedule Meeting Date to June 18, 2024

A motion was made by Commissioner Matheson, seconded by Commissioner Jamieson to reschedule the regular meeting to Tuesday, June 18, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

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

G. Consideration to Accept the Bid for the Ritz Expansion

Vice-Mayor Carter stated the bid came in from J. Davis Contracting at \$4,000,000.00, over the last few months our Architect has been working with estimators at J. Davis and his valued engineer project is down to \$3,100,000.00. This would provide adequate restrooms, a large hall, access to the balcony area and be a great addition to what has become an anchor for downtown, it's proven its success. Vice-Mayor Carter stated the restrooms are desperately needed as well as the extra space.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Matheson to accept J. Davis Contracting bid in the amount of \$3,100,000.00 from for renovations at the Ritz Theatre and ask staff to find funding for \$2,100,000.00 with no more of Prime +1. Motion carried unanimously 4-1, Commissioner Hellenga abstained.

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

H. Public Hearing and First Reading of Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budgets

City Manager Fredda Wheeler gave an overview of the Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget.

Motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carter, seconded by Commissioner Matheson to approve the First Reading of Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget. Motion carried unanimously.

**RESULT: PRESENTATION**

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

**V. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Gail Fry.



*Gail Fry*  
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Mayor  
*Beth Redden*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk