

**Tyrone Town Council  
Meeting Minutes  
February 6, 2020**

Present:

Mayor, Eric Dial

Mayor Pro Tem, Gloria Furr

Council Member, Ken Matthews

Council Member, Linda Howard

Council Member, Melissa Hill

Town Manager, Brandon Perkins

Town Clerk, Dee Baker

Police Chief, Randy Mundy

Court Clerk, April Spradlin

Finance Manager, Sandy Beach

Library Supervisor, Patty Newland

Public Works Director/Engineer, Scott Langford

Police Lieutenants, Eric DeLoose and Philip Nelson

**Public Comments**

Mr. Danny Dolan, who lives on Taylor Ridge Ct., spoke regarding the noise ordinance. He introduced himself as the Chairman of the Fayette-Coweta County Libertarian Party. He stated that there were several useless and unnecessary laws in place, such as; in Quitman, Georgia it was illegal for your chicken to cross the road, and according to Federal Law, it was prohibited to walk your dog on a leash over 6 feet long on Federal property. He stated that in Tyrone it was illegal to have a lengthy and too loud conversation across your neighbor's fence. He added that the noise ordinance stated that the normal volume during the day in residential areas is a maximum of 55 decibels and 50 at night. He shared that the Center for Hearing and Communication stated that the decibels for a normal indoor conversation were 60, a ringing telephone was 80 and crying children were 110 decibels. Mr. Dolan explained that he had children and allowed them to go outside. If his children's noise was louder than an indoor conversation in Tyrone, it was considered a punishable offense. He added that he understood that the Police Department and the Town did not wish to use it that way, however; a future Council or even your neighbors could call the authorities. He stated that an online acquaintance stated that if his neighbor was playing his music too loud, he would just introduce himself and talk about it. That is how mature adults handle situations; it is better to meet your neighbors instead of calling the Police.

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We do not need laws to teach us how to be good neighbors. He ended by sharing that Tyrone did not need to spend money on decibel meters or training, there is an app on our phones that does the same thing.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Council Member Furr made a motion to approve the agenda.

Council Member Matthews seconded the motion. Motion was approved 4-0.

**Consent Agenda:** *All matters listed under this item are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will not be separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered separately.*

Approval of minutes, January 20, 2019

Council Member Howard made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Council Member Matthews seconded the motion. Motion was approved 4-0.

### **Presentations/Recognition:**

State of the Town Address. *Eric Dial, Mayor*

## **TYRONE STATE OF THE TOWN – 2020**

On behalf of Council, I want to start by thanking the people of Tyrone for entrusting us with the leadership of this Town. We're grateful for the continued opportunity and we recognize the importance of our responsibilities.

In this time of growth, prosperity, and transition, the impact of our decisions is likely more important than any time in our history.

Our economy is thriving, for which we're certainly grateful, but a strong economy brings with it a set of challenges that we need to consider. For example, we receive far more inquiries for development than we have in the past.

While respecting the rights of property owners, it's our job to determine the collective desires for our future, and incumbent upon us to ensure that inevitable growth is managed properly.

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Before we look into 2020, I thought it would be a good idea to consider just what Tyrone is. There are going to be differing opinions on what we want to be, but let's first allow the facts to establish who we are.

Our population is approximately 7,300 and modestly increasing. You may be surprised to hear that we have 535 businesses in Tyrone representing over 5,500 employees.

Our median household income is approaching \$100,000 and our median home value \$275,000. By comparison, the county as a whole is closer to \$80,000 and the low to mid \$200,000s.

We are unique in that we are 20 minutes from a major airport, 30 minutes from downtown Atlanta, and 5 minutes from a major international film studio.

Despite being in this desirable location, unlike other cities, we have hundreds of acres of undeveloped land, and it's catching the eyes of investors.

One point of note that we share with our county is that we currently have the fastest growing aging population in the 20-county region and at the current rate of growth, almost one-third of our citizens will be 65 or older by the year 2040.

We understand that we need to govern accordingly both in accommodating this sector of people and encouraging younger adults to make Tyrone their home.

So, we've established who Tyrone is. Now let's discuss who we want to be and where we want to go.

Our first step in making these decisions was to hear from you. You communicated to us in no uncertain terms through our 2017 comprehensive plan that your primary areas of interest are downtown and the 74 corridor.

The future and integrity of the 74 corridor is controlled by infrastructure, planning, zoning, traffic management, and private investment.

In partnership with GDOT and our neighbors, we are working to ensure that smart growth takes place and any adverse impact is minimal.

GDOT plans to convert the majority of the intersections into R-cuts and J-turns which significantly improve safety and help traffic flow.

For our part, we will focus on setbacks, natural buffers, and updated infrastructure. We are also establishing proper zoning that promotes desirable development.

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Specific standards are and will continue to be applied to this stretch of highway for aesthetic and continuity purposes.

We look forward to working with those who choose the 74 corridor for their homes and businesses and commit ourselves to assist them along the way.

As for downtown, you overwhelmingly directed us to revitalize, improve, and invest so we're doing just that. Downtown is our focus.

You've noticed that we have begun the implementation of our years of planning and we're well on our way to great changes. Our new municipal complex will be completed in late fall and it's going to be beautiful.

We're confident that this town centerpiece will be something that everyone can be proud of. Council and staff have done a great job of joining together to create a home high in quality and responsible in cost.

Now let's all pray for good weather and no surprises so we're on schedule and under budget.

We will also be exploring the creation of a Downtown Development Authority to bring in additional minds and sets of hands on the work we are doing. This would provide additional avenues of revenue through grants and other funding.

We have to decide what to do with the current Town Hall, the current police department, and the old fire station. We want input on these decisions.

Another dire need for breathing life into downtown is sewer. We have restaurants that are being forced to use paper and plastic, and in some cases even cut back on their operating hours.

Just in time, we will begin construction any day now on an expanded sewer system and these concerns will be no more.

With sewer comes more good news. Though we don't make the decision, I am increasingly confident that Tyrone Elementary will re-open in the Fall of 2021.

We have entered into an agreement with the school system to provide sewer so, at the very least, we have done our part.

I ask each of you to encourage school board members to make Tyrone Elementary a priority.

Tyrone will have waited almost ten long years to get the attention we deserve with our school.

If we are right, the school, sewer, and municipal complex projects translate into approximately \$12 million worth of public investment in downtown alone.

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We're confident that this will prompt additional private investment which will result in significant revitalization just as you have called us to do.

Also, in the category of "it never gets old," Tyrone is again one of the safest cities in Georgia. Our citizens and our police officers deserve our praise for this recognition.

I say this every year, but it's worth repeating. It is not an easy time to serve in law enforcement. Men and women, you do your job anyway, and you do it admirably. On behalf of 7,300 people – thank you.

In 2019, we took steps to significantly increase officer pay at no cost to our taxpayers.

All of our employees deserve more recognition than I can provide tonight. We know you are faithful and hard-working and deserve a great deal of credit for making this town what it is.

We are working on a new, more employee-friendly retirement policy that will allow our people to retire at a younger age and will be useful to us in recruiting and retaining talent.

In short, the state of the town is solid and our future is bright. In future decades, I believe we'll look back on 2020 as a year of accomplishment and progress.

Your elected officials and staff are committed to preserving our town's character, putting people first, and guiding our great town toward excellence in every way.

**Proclamation: Black History Month**

Mayor Dial stated that he had invited the President of the local NAACP, but that he was unable to attend. He then read the proclamation.

**Introduction of new Police Officer, Dakota Massey:**

Chief Mundy stated that he planned to bring all new hires to Council for introduction; however, with retention in mind, he hoped was that it would not happen too often. He introduced Officer Dakota Massey from Thomaston, a two-year veteran of the police force. He stated that she was doing an outstanding job and that this was the final Officer slot available, now they are fully staffed. Mayor Dial shared, on behalf of Council, "welcome to the Tyrone family".

Mayor Dial then introduced Finance Accounting Specialist, Bridget Smith. He welcomed her to the family as well.

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Rushton Audit Report. *Julie George, CPA, Rushton and Company*

Ms. Beach introduced Ms. Julie George and stated that she would be sharing the Town's annual financial report for the fiscal year ending, June 30, 2019.

Ms. George thanked Council for the opportunity on behalf of Rushton and Company. She also gave thanks to Ms. Beach and Mr. Perkins and added that they always worked very hard to help things run smoothly. She stated that the financial statements were the responsibility of the Town's management and that her firm was responsible in providing their opinion based on a fair presentation of the financial statements. She added that the audit was provided in accordance with auditing standards that are generally accepted in the United States and the Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Ms. George stated that it was their opinion that the financial statements were presented fairly as of June 30, 2019.

Ms. George shared that slide three of the presentation (pages 4-6 in the financial report) explained the government-wide statements. This gives information on the Town as a whole, using the full accrual basis of accounting. The first column presents governmental activities, the second column represents business-type activities. She explained that the business-type would include sewer and sanitation and the government column included all others: the general fund, confiscated assets, and SPLOST funds. She shared that the statement of net position presents the assets, deferred outflows of resources, liabilities, and residual net position of the Town. Page six represented the results of operations as a whole for the Town such as expenditures and program revenues. These revenues have a specific purpose such as LMIG grants. She noted that on page five, the Town ended the fiscal year with a net of 19.7 million, which was an increase over the prior year.

Ms. George explained that on slide four, the net position for the last five fiscal years was broken down. She added that the net capital assets would include building, cars, equipment, and infrastructure which included any debt or depreciation. The restricted net position included SPLOST, capital outlay, and confiscated assets. The unrestricted net position included funds that were not invested in capital assets. She added that the Town had revenue over expenditures, primarily due to public work's road paving and stormwater repairs and maintenance from fiscal year 2019.

Ms. George shared that slide five (page 51 of the report) mapped out the general fund. The report reflects revenues and expenditures between 2018 and 2019. There was an increase of just under \$100,000 at 2.6%. There was a decrease in licenses and permits from the prior year. A detailed schedule could be found on page 52 of the report with a more extensive breakdown.

Ms. George added that there was an increase in expenditures over the previous year of approximately \$344,000, at 7.5%. The Town spent approximately 5% more in 2019.

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A list of the increases is reflected in the following categories: general government, public safety, public works, culture and recreation, housing and development and debt services. She added that pages 53-55 gave more detail.

Ms. George stated that there was an increase in the unassigned fund balance. She explained that \$425,000 was paid back in SPLOST funds. She added that although SPLOST funds were not considered in that calculation, it was important to keep in mind that having SPLOST funds made it possible for the Town to fund projects without using the general fund unassigned reserves.

Ms. George moved on to slide 6 (revenues & expenditures graph). She highlighted that over the last four years, revenues had remained greater than expenditures which was good. She added that in fiscal year 2019 the gap was less.

Ms. George explained that slide 7 dealt with proprietary funds (sewer and sanitation). Page 61 of the financial report reflects that there was an increase in operating revenues of \$17,738 at 5.1%, and expenditures increased 55.24%. The increases from operations were due to technical services for inspections and mapping of the sewer system, increased usage, fees from Fairburn, and increased repairs and maintenance on lift station pumps.

Ms. George moved to slide 8 (sanitation fund). Operating revenues and expenditures decreased greatly as was expected. The Town discontinued providing sanitation collection services and outsourced all activities, including billing and collection, which began on April 1, 2018.

Ms. George referred to slide 9, internal controls and other matters (page 68-69 of the report). She stated that to perform the audit report, internal controls and compliance were considered. This would not be included within the professional opinion; however, it was part of compliance and reporting. She stated that the internal control comment had been stated in the past regarding a significant deficiency in the lack of segregation of duties. She added that this was very common, especially in small towns, and was a part of most of her government reports. With a small staff, oftentimes there was a crossover of duties. Ms. George stated that they would continue to review and that Ms. Beach and Mr. Perkins would continue to look for ways to minimize the risk. She did not expect it to go away; Town staff and her firm would attempt to alleviate the risk.

Ms. George explained the three remaining slides in the presentation reporting changes. As it pertained to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, 88 (GASB), there was a change; certain disclosures related to debt, including debt borrowings and direct placements.

The statement was implemented during fiscal year 2019. It defined debt and increases disclosure in notes to financial statements of all state and local governments. This can be found on pages 36-37 of the financial report and does not affect the balances; it increases disclosures.

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She added that as a firm, they work alongside staff for implementations. Ms. George stated that GASB 84 was going to be implemented and effective for the Town by June 30, 2020. This change would affect Tyrone's Municipal Court. She gave examples that could be found on pages 15, 66, and 67 of the financial report. Ms. George stated that GASB 87 would be implemented as well. This change would affect leases. A templet had been created and her firm would ensure that staff was prepared for the change. This would take place by June 30, 2021.

Ms. George, in closing, referred to the letter submitted by Rushton, regarding the report. She shared that the letter stated that Tyrone had implemented GASB 88 and that no difficulties were encountered while performing the audit.

Mayor Dial asked if the mark against the Town was a common occurrence, why was it not handled differently for smaller towns in general? Ms. George stated that it was common practice with small businesses also. The standards require auditors to inform you of any significant deficiencies. You as the government need to be made aware of any risk. Mayor Dial stated that the Town would have to raise taxes to hire more staff. Ms. George added that auditing standards have not separated small entities from large because the risk is still there. It is a risk you have to live with; it is very common. She added that during her career, she was not privy to any entity that had hired more staff to eliminate that issue. She stated that it is not something that your staff is not doing, it is only a limitation.

Mayor Dial thanked Ms. George and shared that Ms. Beach was doing a fine job as the Finance Manager.

#### **New Business:**

##### 1. Nomination of Mayor Pro Tem. *Eric Dial, Mayor*

Council Member Hill made a motion to nominate Gloria Furr as Mayor Pro Tem.

Council Member Howard seconded the motion. Motion was approved 4-0.

##### 2. Approval to reappoint Dia Hunter and Scott Bousquet to the Planning Commission.

Council Member Furr made a motion to reappoint Dia Hunter and Scott Bousquet to the Planning Commission.

Council Member Howard seconded the motion. Motion was approved 4-0.

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## **Staff Comments**

Ms. Baker informed everyone that the last day to register for the Presidential Preference Primary election is February 24<sup>th</sup>. The election date is Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at your regular polling place. Beginning March 2<sup>nd</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, early voting would take place in the Tyrone Council Chambers. The first two weeks would be from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm the last week would be from 7:00 am – 5:00 pm with one Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. She informed everyone to visit the Fayette County website under elections for a video explaining how to use the new voting machines.

## **Council Comments**

Mayor Dial asked all staff members in attendance to please stand. He asked everyone to thank the men and women, they are good people who work very hard for us. Working for the government, they do not receive sufficient pay as they should. We are proud to have them; you are a jewel in the crown of Tyrone. We thank you for everything that you do.

Mayor Dial introduced Executive Director of Aerotropolis Atlanta Community Improvement Districts (CID), Mr. Gerald McDowell in the audience. Mr. McDowell explained that the community improvement district has been in Georgia since the mid '80s. The Aerotropolis Atlanta CID focuses mainly on the Hartsfield International Airport area. The main goal is to identify projects for improvement such as beautification, public safety, and transportation. He added that the Aerotropolis aspect of it was that the area surrounding the airport would develop like a city. We have the same desire to create a live, work, play model as a city. He added that he was happy to be a part of that team and was also a proud resident of Tyrone. He added that he hoped to contribute his talent and skills to the Town.

## **Executive Session**

Council Member Furr made a motion to move into Executive Session to review the Executive Session minutes from January 16, 2020.

Council Member Hill seconded the motion. Motion was approved 4-0.

Council Member Howard made a motion to reconvene.

Council Member Furr seconded the motion. Motion was approved 4-0.

Council Member Matthews made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes from January 16, 2020.

Council Member Howard seconded the motion. Motion was approved 4-0.

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## **Adjournment**

Council Member Howard made a motion to adjourn. The motion was approved 4-0.  
The meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.

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Eric Dial, Mayor

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Dee Baker, Town Clerk