



#### **CIVILITY PLEDGE**

*The way we govern ourselves is often as important as the positions we take. Our collective decisions will be better when differing views have had the opportunity to be fully vetted and considered. All people have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy and openness. We value all input. We commit to conduct ourselves at all times with civility and courtesy to each other.*

#### **ETHICS COMMITTEE**

3468 N Fulton Ave.  
Hapeville, GA 30354

April 9, 2024 12:00 PM

#### **MINUTES**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** by Chairman Newell at 12:02 PM
2. **ROLL CALL:** All Members were present, which constituted a quorum.
  - Jerome Newell, Chairman
  - Robert Hall, Vice-Chairman
  - Raymond Farr
  - Benjamin Smith
  - Leon Willams
3. **WELCOME:** Chairman Jerome Newell welcomed all to the April 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting.
4. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**
  - 4.I. Approval of Chairman Nominee.

**MOTION:** Committee member Hall made a motion to appoint **Jerome Newell as Committee Chairman**; Committee member Smith provided a second. **Motion carried 4-0.**
  - 4.II. Approval of Vice-Chairman Nominee.

**MOTION:** Chairman Newell made a motion to appoint **Robert Hall as Vice Chairman**, Committee member Farr provided a second. **Motion carried 5-0.**
  - 4.III. Approval of Secretary/Treasurer Nominee.

**MOTION:** Chairman Newell made a motion to appoint **City Clerk, Sharee Steed as Secretary/Treasurer**; Committee member Hall provided a second. **Motion carried 5-0.**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
  - 5.I. Consideration and Action to approve the July 11, 2023, Ethics Committee minutes.

**MOTION:** Committee member Hall made a motion to approve the July 11, 2023; Chairman Newell provided a second. **Motion carried 5-0.**
6. **NEW BUSINESS:**
  - 6.I. Discussion on encouraging the Mayor and Council to adopt the City of Ethics Resolution.

**DISCUSSION:** City Clerk, Sharee Steed, expressed excitement that the full group was present, noting it was the first time in nearly two years. She informed the members, particularly the new ones, that while the city doesn't receive many ethics complaints, it is important to maintain its status as a "City of Ethics." The adoption of this resolution by the Mayor and Council would reclassify the city under the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA)

as a City of Ethics, a status the city previously held but had not recertified since 2019, prior to the onset of COVID-19. Mrs. Steed explained that the resolution adopts five core principles of being a City of Ethics: serving others over oneself, using resources efficiently, treating all people fairly, using the power of office for the well-being of constituents, and creating an environment of honesty, openness, and integrity. These principles highlight the city's commitment to ethical governance and transparency.

She emphasized that the ethics board ensures that elected and appointed officials are held accountable and transparent to the citizens. Mrs. Steed also mentioned that April 30th is the actual deadline to submit the application for recertification. Once approved, the city will be recognized on the GMA website and acknowledged during the annual convention. The Mayor has expressed interest in getting this resolution adopted, and Mrs. Steed does not foresee any opposition from the council. She recommended introducing the resolution to the council at their April 16th meeting and encouraged members to attend and show support. The application fee for recertification is \$85, and she would handle the submission process.

**-No Action was taken-** The Committee reached a consensus for the City Clerk to move forward with the recertification process and present the resolution to the Mayor and Council at the April 16, 2024, meeting.

6.II. Action and Consideration to Approve the 2024 Ethics Committee Meeting Schedule.

**MOTION:** Committee member Hall made a motion to approve the 2024 Ethics Committee Meeting Schedule; Chairman Newell provided a second. **Motion carried 5-0.**

6.III. Update on Bylaws and Training.

**DISCUSSION:** City Clerk, Sharee Steed informed the committee that the bylaws would be re-adopted at the July 9th meeting, although it could be done earlier. She mentioned that she would send the bylaws to all members for review and noted that updates had already been made to reflect previous requests, such as holding mandatory training twice a year and ensuring new members receive training within the first three months. The schedule will remain to stay as quarterly meetings, and the revised bylaws are expected to be ready for review by next meeting.

Additionally, Mrs. Steed discussed the 2024 training schedule provided by GMA, emphasizing that the Ethics Class, which is mandatory for new members, is only offered in January. Due to the influx of newly elected officials taking the class, it quickly filled up. She noted that there are no virtual options for the Ethics Class, as confirmed by GMA, and the next available session is in Savannah during a conference in June. However, she expressed concern about sending members to Savannah for a single class and is looking for other opportunities throughout the year.

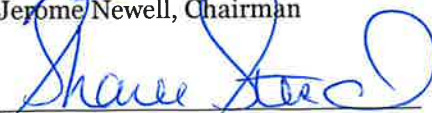
**-No Action was taken.** This was a discussion item only.

7. **ADJOURN:**

**MOTION:** Chairman Newell made a motion to adjourn at 12:15 PM, Committee member Smith provided a second. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jerome Newell, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sharee Steed, Secretary