

**Mayor**  
Rhonda Haight

**City Council**  
William Whaley, Mayor Pro  
Tempore  
Jack Taylor  
Christy Kay  
Bill Bivins  
Angie Arp



**City Clerk**  
Amy Mintz

**City Attorney**  
Chuck Conerly

**City of Blue Ridge**  
**City Council Meeting**  
**Recap**

**April 16, 2024**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Blue Ridge City Hall**

**480 West First Street**

**Blue Ridge, Ga 30513**

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1. **Call Meeting to Order 6:00pm**
2. **Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance Led by Council Member Whaley.**
3. **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting**
  - a. **March 19, 2024 – Council Meeting Approved**
4. **Approval of Agenda or Motion to Amend Agenda (if applicable)**

**A motion to amend the agenda to table 5A until may meeting, and move 8A to executive session was offered by Council Member Whaley, seconded by Council Member Arp. Passed unanimously.**

5. **Public Hearings**
  - a. **VARIANCE REQUEST FOR BEVERLY J. SEARLES FOUNDATION BR2024-12 REMOVED AND TABLED UNTIL MAY MEETING.**
6. **Consent Agenda Approved**
  - a. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE GEORGIA INTERLOCAL RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY PROPOSAL INVOICE FOR \$169,744 WITH THE COVERAGE PERIOD OF MAY 1, 2024 THROUGH MAY 1, 2025.**

**7. Action Agenda Items (Items Requiring the Approval of the City Council)**

- a. **HIRING OF PLANNING/ZONING MANAGER FOR CITY OF BLUE RIDGE – TRIPP RITCHIE**

**MOVED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- b. RED LIGHT REPLACEMENT AT EAST 1<sup>ST</sup> STREET AND CHURCH STREET **Approved**

- c. AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 22 (“TRAFFIC CODE”) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF BLUE RIDGE, GEORGIA TO ADD A NEW ARTICLE IV (“OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES”); TO ALLOW FOR CERTAIN “OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES” TO BE DRIVEN ON CITY STREETS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGULATION OF SAME; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES. **BR2024-09 SECOND READING**

**Adopted**

- d. A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION RELATIVE TO PROJECT N/A, FANNIN COUNTY, P.I. NO. 0017039 TO WIDEN STATE ROUTE 5 FROM SOUTH OF PINEVIEW LANE TO SOUTH OF WASH WILSON ROAD IN FANNIN COUNTY. **BR2024-11 Approved**

- e. PRESENTATION OF VETO BY CITY CLERK

**A motion to override the veto was offered by Council Member Taylor, seconded by Council Member Arp. Veto stands with Council Member Whaley voting no.**

**A motion to take the interim authority away from the mayor and confer the same authority on an interim basis given to the City Clerk was offered by Council Member Arp, seconded by Council Member Taylor.**

**Council returns to prior motion made by Council Member Arp “A motion to take the interim authority away from the mayor and confer the same authority on an interim bases given to the City Clerk was offered by Council**

Member Arp, seconded by Council Member Taylor.”

Motion passes with Council Member Whaley and Kay voting no.

A motion as the first reading, the revised ordinance BR2024-08 with the words “or contracts for” be removed from section 1B1 and that this ordinance, revised, be on the agenda for adoption at the next meeting was offered by Council Member Arp, seconded by Council Member Taylor. Motion passes with Council Member Whaley voting no.

8. Discussion Agenda Items **None**

9. Reports **None**

10. Public Comment

*Do not misconstrue this as a question-and-answer session with the Mayor/Council. Limit 3 minutes per person. Please state name and address before comments. All comments should be addressed to the Mayor.*

- a. Mike Panter – Not Present
- b. Cesear Martinez

A motion to adjourn the meeting was offered by Council Member Taylor. No second. Motion dies.

- c. Donna Thompson
- d. Josh Snider

11. Executive Session (If Needed)

A motion to enter into executive session was offered by Council Member Taylor, seconded by Council Member Arp. Passed unanimously. Executive opened at 6:21pm.

A motion to adjourn executive was offered by Council Member Taylor, seconded by Council Member Bivins. Passed unanimously. Executive adjourned at 6:48pm.

A motion to engage outside council to render a legal opinion as to whether the Mayor has violated the City Charter offered by Council Member Taylor, seconded by Council Member Arp.

Retainer fee of \$5,000.

Mayor Haight asked for a motion to amend the motion with the following additions:

To render a legal opinion on the Wojohn tapes. An opinion on the qualifying for elected official Jack Taylor, his legality. A legal decision on the bail bonding business. A decision of the purchase of City surplus equipment, including the fact the ditch witch was purchased for \$100 and he proposed to sell it to a person in the City for \$10,000. A legal opinion based on the fact his girlfriend purchased two vehicles. A legal opinion as to whether he violated the Charter in parking his motorcycle at the police department. A legal opinion as to whether Bill Bivins violated the Charter, as seen in the Wojohn tapes released at the end of January 2024. A legal opinion rendered for Angie Arp, who purchased a piece of property that received a compliance violation in July of 2023, and by October of 2023 she purchased the property for \$20,000 with a tax value of \$53,000. A legal opinion on the abuse of power, as seen in the Wojohn tapes. A legal opinion for an email from Tonya Walker, saying she has voter intimidation placed upon her by Angie Arp. A legal opinion as to the Wojohn tapes again. A legal opinion if Angie Arp should have given her notice to the City when the short-term rental ordinance came before the Council last year, because she owns short term rental in CBD, the only zone that allowed to keep short term rentals and would also like for the legal opinion to be rendered by another law firm.

A motion to amend the motion was offered by Council Member Whaley. Motion dies for lack of a second.

Council returns to prior motion made by Council Member Taylor “A motion to engage outside council to render a legal opinion as to whether the Mayor has violated the City Charter, that the City engage Brinson Askew Berry, LLP for that purpose and that we authorize and instruct the City Clerk to execute the related April 16, 2024 representation and fee agreement with the same firm and also instruct the Accounts Payable person to pay the retainer was offered by Council Member Taylor, seconded by Council Member Arp.”

**Motion passes with Council Member Kay abstaining, and Council Member Whaley voting no.**

**12. Adjournment 7:58pm.**