



## BROOKS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES

**December 16, 2024**

Mayor Langford led the Invocation and the Pledge, then called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor: Daniel Langford

Council Members Present: Ted Britt  
Kay Brumbelow  
Brian Davis  
Scott Israel  
Todd Speer

The proposed agenda for Monday, December 16, 2024, was emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Council Member Todd Speer motioned to approve the agenda; Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The draft Council Meeting Minutes for Monday, November 18, 2024, were emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the Council Minutes; Council Member Scott Israel motioned to approve the November 18, 2024, minutes, as presented; Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous with Council Members Ted Britt and Brian Davis abstaining.

#### **Recognitions:**

Mayor Langford presented certificates of excellence to the Brooks Bear football team, coaches, and the Brooks Elite II cheerleaders and coaches. The Brooks Bear football team was recognized for being four-time Super Bowl Champions, and the Brooks Elite II cheerleaders were recognized for achieving four grand champion and first-place awards, three spirit awards, and one sportsmanship award. Five team members of each category and two of their coaches were present to accept the certificates in person.

#### **Public Hearing: - Opened at 6:38 p.m. / Closed at 6:46 p.m.**

#### **Fence Variance – 113 W. McIntosh Rd – Resident/Applicant Aaron Edge:**

M. Ungaro reviewed the proposed variance request, stating that the resident/applicant had applied for and received approval to install a 6' privacy fence approximately 60' off the rear of his property line. The fence's purpose is to provide privacy from the traffic and activities on the Hwy 85 Connector. Once the fence slats were installed, staff informed the applicant that the height was in excess of the allowed limit. The resident/applicant was allowed to continue installation provided that a variance be applied for; if the variance is approved, no further action would be needed; if the variance is denied, the resident/applicant will cut 2" off the fence that has been built, and the remaining fence would be at a 6' height.

Council Member Kay Brumbelow asked if there were any negative ramifications to the height; M. Ungaro stated no, there were not. The resident/applicant stated the fence is for privacy in his backyard and to help block the lighting from Hwy 85 Connector.

Mayor Langford asked if there were any further questions or comments, and after hearing none, he declared the public hearing closed.

**New Business:**

**Fence Variance – 113 W. McIntosh Rd.:**

With no additional questions or comments regarding the variance request, Mayor Langford asked if there was a motion regarding the fence variance on 113 W. McIntosh Rd. Council Member Brian Davis motioned to approve the fence variance as presented. Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**HB 581 Homestead Property Tax:**

M. Ungaro presented an overview of the proposed HB 581 Homestead Property Tax bill, passed in November, to become effective on January 1, 2025. HB 581 was passed to address rising property tax concerns and alleviate burdens for eligible Georgia homeowners. If a local government decides not to opt-out, property valuations for 2025 will be based on 2024 and can only increase by the value of the CPI; there is no fixed numerical value, and it can fluctuate either up or down and only on homestead properties. It would not apply to second homes, agricultural, industrial, or rental properties. Other local municipalities, including the county and school board, have until March 1, 2025, to decide.

After a lengthy discussion between the Mayor and Council, Mayor Langford asked if there was a motion regarding the town's position on HB 581.

Council Member Ted Britt motioned that the Town of Brooks NOT to opt out of HB 581; Council Member Todd Speer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Alternative Access for Liberty Tech:**

M. Ungaro showed a sketch that reflects the cemetery expansion areas and the potential location for alternative access to Liberty Tech Charter School. The potential access road is approximately 600' long and is estimated to cost \$37,678. It is based on a 12' wide gravel road with a 6" compacted sub-base. It would allow cars to turn from Hwy 85 Connector to Price Rd by laying 600' of gravel inside the Brooks Football Field complex and utilizing it as a cut-through to eliminate the backup traffic on Hwy 85 Connector.

Council Member Scott Israel stated he sent an email regarding a possible fund-raiser or other options to share in the cost of the alternative access to Liberty Tech. Still, as of this evening's meeting, no response has been received.

Council Member Ted Britt asked if the FCBOE was interested in sharing the costs; M. Ungaro replied that they had not been approached about the project yet.

Council Member Todd Speer asked if the town needs to create a legal easement access document between the town, the charter school, and FCBOE before construction on the school property can begin. M. Ungaro stated he would investigate.

M. Ungaro stated that \$18k of the project costs are for labor and equipment costs that the Fayette County Road Department would charge the town for the work to be done; M. Ungaro said he would work on reducing those costs, and Mayor Langford said he would call Commission Hearn to see if the costs for the labor and equipment could be reduced.

M. Ungaro will work with someone from the FCBOE to review the proposal and attend a council meeting to field questions or requests from the Mayor and Council.

**Committee Reports:**

**Mayor's Report:**

Mayor Langford reported that he has two meetings with other cities regarding HB581 and will attend another meeting this coming Thursday.

**Planning and Zoning:**

M. Ungaro stated there was nothing to report at this time.

**Recreation:**

Chris Moody thanked the Mayor, Council, and Town staff for recognizing the accomplishments of the football players and cheerleaders.

**Library:**

K. Bradley reported no new developments at the library; only two full-size lots and five cremation lots are available for sale.

**Town Clerk Report:**

L. Spohr reported that the 2025 business license renewal forms were mailed out the last week of November.

**Finance Officer's Report:**

L. Spohr reviewed the November financials. LOST revenue for November is up 22.42% compared to last November, and LOST YTD is up 9.18% compared to the previous year. 2023 SPLOST for October is up 22.92% compared to last October, and YTD 2023 SPLOST is up 7.78%.

## **Town Manager Report:**

### **Transportation:**

The County Road Department has recommended a cost-effective alternative to the culvert replacement on Woods Rd. Previously, the Town Engineer specified two 6' concrete culverts (paired), putting the total replacement cost at around \$450,000. The solution recommended by the County is an aluminum box culvert system that would reduce the price by half. This will allow the town to complete this SPLOST project much earlier than anticipated. We could get this project done and paid for in early spring, provided an approved IGA with the county. This would be a two-week process, and the life span far exceeds the concrete culverts.

### **Cemetery:**

The cemetery expansion plan allows for an additional access point on Price Rd and up to forty parking spaces. The current price structure reflects potential revenue for the lots on the Price Rd section over \$800,000. A Columbarium site is also included in the expansion plan but not in the projected revenue stream. This allows cremation remains to be placed in a vault at a lower price than a cemetery plot.

We have installed two posts at the current entrance to block access to the cemetery during Libert Tech functions, which draw excess attendees. Recently, we have had school attendees park in the cemetery, which is acceptable to a point, but numerous drivers have parked on graves—which is unacceptable. This measure was put in place after conferring with the SRO, who fully supports it. Since this measure was instituted, we have had zero issues with errant parking and no complaints from attendees.

Mayor Langford asked when the chain goes up. M. Ungaro replied only during Liberty Tech events, shortly before an event begins, and it is removed once the event has concluded.

### **Brooks Market:**

The Christmas Market had a fantastic turnout on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Santa arrived at 4:15 p.m. via a Fayette County Fire truck at the town tree and then was driven to the chapel via a golf cart. Thank you to the Edge family for donating the use of their golf cart. Bagpipes escorted the children and parents up to the chapel. We had a new food truck vendor (BBQ) who is looking forward to attending the entire 2025 market season.

### **Any Other Business:**

Resident Bishow Watts presented a proposal for a Brooks Municipal Flag Design contest that, if approved, would begin on January 1, 2025, and end on July 1, 2025. The contest form, rules, guidelines, and design aid sites to assist in creating a flag for consideration are available on the Town's website, Town Hall, and Brooks Library. All flag designs must be submitted to the Town Hall in hardcopy form, either in person, by email, or by USPS. All entries will be posted in Town Hall for the public to see. All residents within the 30205 zip code are eligible to enter. At the end of the contest, the flags will be reviewed by a panel of judges (yet to be determined), and a winner will be selected from those entries.

Mayor Langford asked if there was a motion regarding the flag design competition. Council Member Scott Israel motioned to approve the flag design competition as presented. Council Member Ted Britt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Adjourn:**

With no further business to discuss this evening, Mayor Langford requested a motion to adjourn. Council Member Brian Davis motioned to adjourn, and Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded it. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Lorey Spohr  
Town Clerk