



**OFFICIAL MINUTES  
RINCON CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2023  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
107 W. 17<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
7:00 PM**

**Councilmember Present:**

Reese Browher  
Levi Scott, Jr.  
Patrick Kirkland  
Jesse Blackwell, Jr.  
Michelle Taylor  
Damon Rahn

**Present:**

Ken Lee, Mayor  
Jonathan Lynn, City Manager  
Raymond Dickey, City Attorney  
Dulcia King, City Clerk  
Daniel Thompson, Police Lieutenant  
Lou Reed, Interim Fire Chief  
Mike Osborne, Recreation Director  
Tm Bowles, Public Works Director  
Elizabeth Cartwright, Finance Director

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM. The Invocation was given by Councilmember Scott and Pledge to the Flag was recited.

**Approval of the agenda with the following:**

Addition of new business items 5A and 5B.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Scott  
Second: Councilmember Rahn  
Vote by Council: Unanimous

**Approval of the January 9, 2023 minutes:**

Motion to approve: Councilmember Kirkland

Second: Councilmember Blackwell

Vote by Council: Unanimous

**Public Hearing:**

*Turn meeting over to public hearing officer, Raymond Dickey:*

Open public hearing: 7:10 PM

**Public Hearing on a petition filed by Superior Fence & Rail Company, requesting a Conditional Use to obtain the property as a retail facility with outside storage. The 1.061 acre parcel is located at 616 Towne Park Loop and zoned GC (General Commercial); the property is owned by RX Elite Fitness LLC. (Parcel # R2640016)**

Attorney Dickey opened the public hearing. He asked was the public hearing advertised in the legal organ, was the property marked with the proper signage and were the property owners within the required distance given written notice, Mr. Lynn said yes. Mr. Tyler Pratt owner of Superior Fence & Rail was present. Mr. Tyler said based on the last meeting he seeking conditional use approval under the current zoning code. At the last Planning and Zoning Board meeting they outlined a few conditions; the style of trucks that can be owned or that can be on stored on the property can only have two axles no semi trucks, the property has to be properly fenced with at least a eight foot chain link fence with privacy slates and barb wire on top, the outdoor material stored cannot be more than two feet over the top of the fence.

Close public hearing: 7:13 PM

*Turn the meeting back over to Mayor Lee.*

**Vote on a petition filed by Superior Fence & Rail Company, requesting a Conditional Use to obtain the property as a retail facility with outside storage. The 1.061 acre parcel is located at 616 Towne Park Loop and zoned GC (General Commercial); the property is owned by RX Elite Fitness LLC. (Parcel # R2640016)**

Mayor Lee said he wanted to make sure he was clear, this is not a zoning change; we are giving a conditional use for retail sales. Mr. Lynn said yes. The Planning and Zoning Board did recommended approval of the conditional use.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Rahn

Second: Councilmember Taylor

Vote by Council: Unanimous

### **Old Business:**

**1. Cranston LLC request approval of Preliminary Sketch Plans for a Major Subdivision. The property is located at 0 Fairmont Drive. The property is 73.71 acres and is zoned R-4 (single family residential); the property is owned by Eddie and Darnett Coleman. (Parcel #: R2740001A00) (Tabled at the 12/12/2022 meeting)**

Motion to remove from table: Councilmember Taylor  
Second: Councilmember Scott  
Vote by Council: Unanimous

The petitioner requested to table this until March 27.

Motion to table: Councilmember Kirkland  
Second: Councilmember Scott  
Vote by Council: Unanimous

### **Presentation of Officer of the Year**

Lieutenant Thompson presented Officer Courtney Aliffi with a certificate of appreciation. Officer Aliffi has volunteered to be a forensic interviewer, she is an active investigator with the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and she goes above and beyond for the children of Rincon.

Officer Justin Hynko will receive the Officer of Year Award and Officer Ian Gallagher will receive the Chief's Exemplary Service Award

Interim Chief Reed introduced new fire fighters, Malik Roberson, who will be fulltime and Samuel Floyd, who will be part time.

### **New Business:**

**1. Vote on a request filed by Rincon Shadow LLC, requesting approval for a Preliminary/Final Site Plan that consists of a 7,000 square foot retail/office building. The property is located at 461 S. Columbia Ave. The property is zoned GC (General Commercial); the parcel is owned by The Kroger Co. (Parcel # R2120017)**

CJ Chance with Hussey Gay and Bell was present. Mr. Chance said this will be located in the Kroger parking and have five tenant spaces. Three have been leased two spaces to an urgent care facility and one space to an ice cream shop. The property has been subdivided and recorded. Mr. Chance said they only question they had from the Planning and Zoning Board was parking counts and there are 102 surplus spaces based on zoning.

Councilmember Kirkland asked about dumpsters. Mr. Chance said there is one dumpster pad and it is located at the southeast corner of the facility. It will be enclosed with concrete on three sides.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Scott

Second: Councilmember Rahn

Vote by Council: Unanimous

## **2. Joe Buhler request approval to appear before Council.**

Mr. Buhler said he is representing his neighbors on Hardy Road and Middleground Road. They have concerns about the traffic on Middleground Road, the school buses, rock trucks and students going to the college using the road as a cut through. They are speeding almost every time they come through. A lot of neighbors are concerned. Some of them walk that road and some bike that road. They appreciate the new paving but where the bridge is there are no rails and the shoulder is not very big. He would like for someone look into the speeding and also the littering. They are concerned citizens and would like to see what they can get done, maybe put a sign up that this is not a cut through, they are going 50 to 55. Councilmember Scott said this is an ongoing issue we are going to have to get some results on this. Mayor Lee said he has had conversations with the Chief and we have had similar problems in other areas in the City. He thinks some heighten enforcement and visibility will get their attention.

Lieutenant Thompson said after Mr. Buhler came to the Police Department he sent an email to Patrol Officers to do radar in the area and they have already had double digit citations. He has already gotten several calls from parents about the tickets. In the past they have reached out to the Career Academy to make sure they put out something about enforcement on Middleground Road. Mayor Lee asked Mr. Lynn to reach out to Dr. Yancy Ford.

## **3. Rincon Recreation Department request approval for the sale of beer and wine at the Rincon Spring Fair.**

Mike Osborne said people that come to the fair are always asking about beer and wine. Of course there will be some questions on how will we monitor people. Councilmember Rahn said he feels like we will be creating problems. Enabling people to bring their children to the fair, drink and then leave is not a good idea especially giving the environment. Mayor Lee agreed and said it is a children's event not an adult event. Councilmember Browher said he agrees with Councilmember Rahn, he is so busy during that time and to add another responsibility to his plate would not be good. The fair is scheduled to start on March 30th. A motion was made to deny.

Motion to deny: Councilmember Scott

Second: Councilmember Rahn

Vote by Council: Unanimous

**4. Request approval to pay Spatial Engineering, Inc \$10,803.26 for Stormwater Data Validation and Updates.**

Mr. Lynn said this is the work Spatial Engineering has done to gather our stormwater customers.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Scott

Second: Councilmember Blackwell

Vote by Council: Unanimous

**5. Request to approve the City of Rincon's Workers Compensation Insurance with Georgia Municipal Association (policy period 1/1/2023 to 1/1/2024) at a total premium amount of \$163,484.00.**

Mayor Lee said this is an increase about ten percent. Mr. Lynn said our payroll has gone up, and the number of positions have increased and we have had a number of claims.

Councilmember Rahn said safety is always top of mind if we don't already have a safety plan in place we need to see about integrating something like that. Human error is going to happen but if there are things that can be addressed let's see about getting a program. Mr. Lynn said Mrs. Hesling has already been tasked with doing this. Mayor Lee said we need to have safety programs in place and as Councilmember Rahn said we need to talk about this regularly. If we are not disciplining someone who is doing improper things in their work then we are wrong. We need to make a record of improper work procedures.

Councilmember Rahn said we need to learn from every accident. Councilmember Browher asked what other providers have we gotten estimates from, Mr. Lynn said we typically do not get estimates from anyone else since we are a part of the GMA pool. They have such a large pool with the other cities involved so we haven't shop rates. Councilmember Browher said he knows the rates are good but it wouldn't hurt to puts some calls out. A motion was made to pay 25% until Council sees the justification for the increase.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Kirkland

Second: Councilmember Blackwell

Vote by Council: Unanimous

**5A. Request approval to purchase three (3) Chevrolet Tahoe's from Hardy Chevrolet in the amount of \$111,816.00.**

Lieutenant Thompson said this will keep them in line with the 2020 fleet maintenance program. Proceeds are to come from the Police Department SPLOST Fund.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Taylor

Second: Councilmember Scott

Vote by Council: Unanimous

**5B. Request approval to purchase two (2) Chevrolet Tahoe's from Hardy Chevrolet in the amount of \$74,544.00.**

These vehicles will be designated to the School Resource Officer program so there will be some reimbursement on the back end of that.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Browher

Second: Councilmember Blackwell

Vote by Council: Unanimous

## **6. Administrative Reports:**

**City Manager** – Mr. Lynn said we have now installed an Owl camera and we will be streaming meetings on Facebook; the Railroad will start maintenance of the railroad crossings on January 21. It is slated for a 12 hour closure. He will confirm date closer to the end of this week; Effingham Day at the Capital begins on Sunday; there is a request for a workshop and he is looking to do this on Monday, February 6;

Mayor Lee said we did have a good meeting about Picket Fences. What we heard is people are parking along the road and that is causing some confusion, so he spoke with Jeff Gunn and he will allow some people to park on his property. Councilmember Browher said he knows at the workshop we will be discussing the Exley property but can we have 10 – 15 minutes for Picket Fences.

**Chief of Police** – Lieutenant Thompson said they will have resources for Picket Fences and will have an officer dedicated to that; Officers were posted on Middleground Road. They had radar/lidar but he didn't see school buses, he will get with the Board of Education; there was a burglary at Take 5 Car Wash and it was solved the same day; Councilmember Browher asked what is the plan for Middleground Road. Lt. Thompson said they will post over there, contact the Career Academy and maybe even show them what a super speeder ticket looks like.

**Building/Zoning Dept.** – Mr. Lynn said the City Planner Mrs. Lewis will be starting on Wednesday.

**Recreation Dept.** – Mr. Osborne said the Fair starts March 31 and goes through during spring break; he is meeting a gentleman that does the booking for UGA football team and they are on board to come in April and do signings; Mr. Osborne gave an update on the tennis court grant, it has been a long process and they are waiting to hear back from the grant administrator; work on the playground will start mid February.

**Water/Sewer/Public Works** – Councilmember Kirkland thanked Mr. Bowles for getting a light fixed; Councilmember Taylor asked about paint for the lines in Lost Plantation, it has come in; Councilmember Browher asked about the concrete patch on Lexington Avenue, he has done a patch but will need to have a contractor come in an fix it; Mr. Dickerson asked if it was possible to get a sign up at Richland Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street and there are no signs. Mr. Bowles will get them put up.

**Finance** – Mrs. Cartwright said she was able to get our interest rates up at the bank so she opened up a couple of new accounts and moved money from Queensborough Bank to Ameris Bank.

**Rincon Golf Course** – Mr. Lynn said they met with Caesar, who operates the Bistro, they are going to cease operation on January 27. There was discussion on the operation of the bistro and if it should stay open.

**7. Executive session to discuss personnel, pending litigation, attorney client privilege, and real estate.**

Motion: Councilmember Scott  
Second: Councilmember Browher  
Vote by Council: Unanimous

Motion to return to meeting: Councilmember Taylor  
Second: Councilmember Browher  
Vote by Council: Unanimous

**8. Follow the statutes of executive session, to put on file an executive session affidavit and resolution.**

Motion to approve: Councilmember Blackwell  
Second: Councilmember Kirkland  
Vote by Council: Unanimous

**9. Take any action that is needed on the items from executive session.**

No action taken.

**Adjourn:**

Motion: Councilmember Scott  
Second: Councilmember Rahn  
Vote by Council: Unanimous