



CITY OF BROOKLET
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L.W. (Nicky) Gwinnett, Jr. Mayor
Hubert Keith Roughton, Mayor Pro-Tem
Bradley Anderson, Councilman
Rebecca Kelly, Councilwoman
James Harrison, Councilman
Sheila Wentz, Councilwoman

Carter Crawford, City Manager
Lori Phillips, City Clerk
Melissa Pevey, Assistant Clerk
Ben Perkins, City Attorney

**Brooklet Hotdog Social
&
Townhall Meeting**

**March 27, 2025
6:30 PM**

Minutes

The Randy Newman Center buzzed with community engagement on Thursday, March 27, 2025, as Brooklet residents gathered for a town hall meeting. The event aimed to foster open dialogue between town officials and citizens, addressing pressing issues and outlining plans for the growing community.

Beginning at 6:30 pm, residents enjoyed hot dogs with all the fixings to kick off the Town Hall Meeting, along with an assortment of chips, refreshing pink lemonade, sweet tea, and chilled water.

The meeting commenced at 7:15 p.m. with a warm welcome, special recognition, and an introduction by Ellen Perkins of the Brooklet Community Development Association. She introduced Pastor Patrick McElveen of Brooklet First Baptist Church, who, in his opening invocation, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to fellowship and prayed for divine guidance in the development of Brooklet.

The Blue Knights of Georgia presented the Georgia state flag and the United States flag. Following this, attendees joined in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Nicky Gwinnett took the floor, expressing his deep affection for his hometown and pledging to work diligently for its future.

"I grew up in this town, was born and raised here; I love it; it means an awful lot to me," Gwinnett said. "And I promise I'll do my very best to do the best I can for this town moving into the future."

He emphasized the importance of community input and envisioned the town hall as an annual event. Gwinnett then introduced key town officials, including the city manager, Carter Crawford, city attorney, Ben Perkins, city engineer, Wesley Parker, and Jody Rogers, vice president of Y-Delta, the company contracted to install the lift station, setting the stage for a comprehensive overview of Brooklet's current state and future trajectory.

Fiscal Responsibility and Planned Growth

Gwinnett highlighted the town's fiscal prudence, noting that property taxes had remained stable for the past five years with no millage increases. This stability was attributed to strategic growth, including new housing developments and the reinstatement of trash service, which contributed to a \$100,000 budget increase. He projected that this trend would continue, with no tax increases anticipated for the upcoming year. A budget work session is scheduled for April 19 to further refine financial plans.

Acknowledging the inevitability of future growth, Gwinnett stressed the need for controlled development to maintain infrastructure integrity. He emphasized the importance of proactive planning over reactive problem-solving, drawing comparisons with other towns that had struggled to keep pace with rapid growth.

Public Safety and Infrastructure Development

The mayor announced the appointment of Michelle Reolegio as Brooklet's new police chief, expressing confidence in her leadership. He outlined the goal of restoring 24/7 police coverage, which would require hiring six to eight officers. This initiative aimed to enhance public safety and address concerns about speeding.

Infrastructure development was a central theme, with discussions focusing on public works and administration. The town had recently invested in new equipment, including a media excavator and a director and mower for ditch maintenance. However, the anticipated growth necessitated further expansion of staff and equipment, particularly regarding the upcoming sewer project.

Gwinnett acknowledged the significant workload on the town's administrative staff, particularly the city clerk, Lori Phillips. He advocated for the hiring of a full-time financial clerk and a permanent city manager to alleviate the administrative burden and ensure efficient operations.

The Landmark Sewer Project

The centerpiece of the meeting was the long-awaited sewer project, a feat Gwinnett likened to "eating an elephant, one bite at a time." He credited Charles Penny, the city manager of Statesboro, for his instrumental role in bringing the project to fruition, a project that had eluded the town for over 25 years. A work session is scheduled for May 10th to determine sewer rates for existing customers.

The mayor also addressed the ongoing force central installation, which aimed to alleviate drainage issues in downtown Brooklet. He expressed optimism that the project would be completed by the end of the year, providing much-needed relief to businesses and residents.

Water Expansion, Commercial Development, & Controlled Subdivision Growth

Complementing the sewer project, the town had completed the third well at the Brooklet First Baptist Church site, a project made possible by the church's sale of the critical 1/2 acre on which the new well now resides. The town had also secured a \$600,000 grant to expand water lines along Highway 80 and Cromley Road, enhancing water infrastructure in the high-growth area.

Gwinnett emphasized the potential for commercial development that the sewer and water projects would unlock. He envisioned a more self-sufficient Brooklet, where residents would have access to essential services and amenities within the town limits.

The town had also embarked on its first comprehensive land-use plan, a significant step toward controlling development and ensuring sustainable growth. Gwinnett highlighted the importance of aligning zoning ordinances with the land use plan to guide future commercial development.

"The only way this town will ever see that is by having this sewer system," Gwinnett remarked. "Most commercial businesses can't function on a septic system."

Recognizing the impact of new subdivisions, the town council had implemented a policy limiting development to 100 sewer taps per year. This strategy aimed to manage growth and allow for time to complete infrastructure upgrades.

Addressing Community Concerns

The meeting transitioned into an open forum, where residents voiced their concerns and posed questions to town officials. Traffic safety emerged as a primary concern, with residents advocating for speed bumps and other traffic-calming measures. Gwinnett acknowledged the issue and assured residents that the town was exploring potential future solutions, including the installation of turn lanes and traffic lights.

Other topics included the timeline for hiring a permanent city manager, the role of the city manager, and the need for increased police presence. Residents also expressed appreciation for the progress made on the sewer project and the contractors' professionalism.

Engineering Updates and Future Plans

Wesley Parker, the city's engineer, provided updates on ongoing projects, including the Cromley Road Sidewalk Project and the sewer project. He emphasized the collaborative efforts with the City of Statesboro and the positive impact of the sewer project on the town's future.

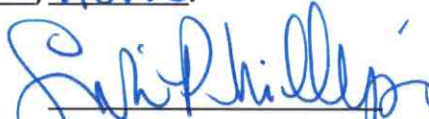
A Collaborative Vision for Brooklet

The Brooklet Town Hall meeting served as a testament to the town's commitment to open communication and collaborative planning. By addressing pressing issues and outlining a clear vision for the future, town officials and residents demonstrated a shared dedication to ensuring Brooklet's continued prosperity.

The meeting concluded with gratitude to Mayor Gwinnett and the City of Brooklet Council for their hard work and dedication, leaving attendees with a sense of optimism and a renewed commitment to working together to build a vibrant and sustainable community.

Approved this 17 day of April, 2025.


L.W. (Nicky) Gwinnett, Jr., Mayor


Lori Phillips, City Clerk

