**Glen Alpine Board of Aldermen**

**Regular Meeting: 2/6/2020**

**Present:** Mayor Benfield, S. Perkins, G. Meise, T. Suttles, T. Helms, Attorney R. Denton, Clerk M. Lalonde

**-Call to Order**

**-Invocation-** Pastor John Terry, GAFBC

**-Pledge of Allegiance**

**-COG Comments:** Mr. Cavanaugh presented an update of the Town Code, COG is working on making revisions, such as converting old ordinance names into new town code chapter names.

-**Q & A with Major Banks Hiceman from BCSD**: Hiceman stated that BCSD has a great working relationship GAPD, they have relied on GAPD to help respond to calls and in return they do the same. Rob Denton asked how much can BCSD help Town of Glen Alpine? Hiceman said BCSD is very limited due to shortage of officers. He stated that Glen Alpine needs to consider response time when thinking about eliminating police officers. Over the last week they had 1003 calls, BCSD average response time is 14 minutes, that response time could be greater if deputies are on other calls. GAPD average response time is 4 minutes.

-**Mayor Comments:** Mayor Benfield read a letter from Alderman Cox, apologizing for not being in attendance, he is ill with flu-like symptoms. Mayor stated that the final decision about police reduction lays upon the board, he commended the response times of GAPD. Mayor asked that things not be taken for granted, and to think about the safety of our citizens.

-**Public Comments:**

**Shirley McDaniels:** Concerned about cats on her street, she stated that Officer Boliek brought a cage when the cage is there no cats come arounds, when the cage is removed the cats come back. She was informed that BCSD has animal control.

**Michelle Lewis:** Stated she is shocked over the agenda, upset, in fact. Stated that GA needs 24-hour protection, in December when she had to call upon the police there was a 2-minute response time at 5am, and she appreciated that, and loves the Fire Department as well. Mrs. Lewis stated that she is a former Alderman and had to make many tough decisions while serving. She also stated that the current board has lost focus, that they should be focusing on the present, not the past. Mrs. Lewis questioned whether the decision about Police was in the best interest of the citizens, or is it a personal vendetta? Mrs. Lewis stated that the citizens of Glen Alpine deserve better than to have deal with this issue year after year.

**Jimmy Wakeford:** Mr. Wakeford stated that this is the 5th time he has come to support the Police Department. Mr. Wakeford questions if discussions are going on in private (between aldermen) without sessions, if so, it is unethical. States that he can’t prove there are personal vendettas, but with claims of sexual harassment, and issues of firearms being discharged inside the town limit that Mr. Suttles has no right to say about the Police Department since he has had run ins with them. Mr. Wakeford asks that the board goes to Pre-Agenda meetings, or at least posting the Agenda on week prior to meetings. Mr. Wakeford feels that the board is dysfunctional and tearing the town apart.

**Christy Ramsey:** Ms. Ramsey feels that she has been to the board meeting too many times to speak of keeping the Police Department. She asks why the board can’t get along. Ms. Ramsey stated that crime rate and drugs have been reduced due the constant presence of the Police. She also said that the majority have expressed concern for keeping the Police, but winders why the board will not listen.

**Karen Suttles:** Mrs. Suttles stated that she is concerned about the inappropriate conduct of the Mayor, she stated that he bullies, curses, and name calls, and communicates threats toward Alderman Suttles. She asked why the Mayor doesn’t think it is necessary for the entire board to make sound decisions concerning the town, that each of the aldermen are elected and should get a fair vote in all decisions. Mrs. Suttles stated that she feels the Mayor is a danger to himself and others, and the citizens deserve better. She also stated that Tim Suttles deserves to be on the board, everyone hates him because he isn’t a “yes man”.

**Tina Norman:** Mrs. Norman states that she lives in the ETJ of Glen Alpine, and lives between two drug streets. She stated anytime she has called 911 that GAPD is always the first one there, beating BCSD to her residence. She has a 9-year-old granddaughter that is scared to go out into the driveway because of the things that go on in the neighborhood. Also, state that she owns a business in GA and relies on them to keep her business safe. She asked Tim (she knows him), if something were to happen at your house with your grandchildren, do you want BCSD or GAPD based on their response times? She states that our lives are worth protecting.

**Jody Lewis:** Mr. Lewis states that crime isn’t going down, it’s going to get worse. He works in the prisons; he knows what he is coming out to the streets. He stated that response time is key, and that whoever votes to reduce the officer must hate the citizens.

**Approval of Agenda-** Motioned made by Helms, Passed 3-1

**Approval of Dept. Reports**- Motion made by Perkins, Passed 4-0

**Approval of Minutes**- Motion made by Suttles, Passed 4-0

**Old Business**:

**Revitalization Committee Report**

G. Meise reported that every property owner that has streetlights will be LED lights. The Committee is looking for lighting for the War Memorial, streetlights for the business owners, they have estimates from several people to get 3 trees cut down, and they are also looking at 4 new public trash cans for the downtown area.

**New Business:**

1. Proposal to amend the 19/20 budget to freeze 1 Police Officer position & 1 Police Car purchase:

Motion made by Perkins to wait until Cox was present to vote on items, Failed 3-1

Motion made by Miese to freeze position & car passed 3-1

1. Set Spending limit for non-emergency purchases. -Moved to March agenda
2. Rename 4th of July Parade to Honor Ruth Clontz

Motion made by Meise amend agenda to vote to rename the 4th of July Parade, passed 4-0

Motion made by Meise to vote to rename the 4th of July Parade, passed 4-0

1. Renew contract with Church/Lowdermilk- Town Audit

Motion made by Perkins to amend agenda to vote to renew contract, passed 4-0

Motion made by Perkins to accept contract from Church/Lowdermilk, passed 4-0

Closed session

1. Zoning Litigation
2. Personnel

Motion made by Helms to go into open session, passed 4-0

Motion made to adjourn, passed 4-0