



Around the Well

May 2020

Vol 11 No 5

City Updates

FY20/21 Budget Calendar

The City budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year was presented during the City Council meeting on April 21 and is available on the City web site. Public comment on the proposed budget document will be received at the May 27 Council meeting. There will also be a public hearing opportunity at the June 16 council meeting. Full budget calendar available on our web site.

Volunteers Needed!

All the wonderful events we hold each year are made possible through the help of our awesome volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Amber McKibben at amckibben@socialcirclega.com or 770-464-1866 or complete the form at socialcirclega.gov/volunteer/

Census

To help our communities when they come back together after the COVID-19 pandemic, we're asking you to please respond to the 2020 Census now. Spend a few minutes today to impact the next 10 years of funding on healthcare, infrastructure, and education. We all see how important these are today. So please go to 2020census.gov and respond today to make America's tomorrow brighter.

Upcoming Events

City Hall Closed

Monday, May 25

Coffee with the City Manager

Wednesday, June 3, 8-9 am

City Hall Conference Room

To suggest a news topic, an update topic or to submit news items of community interest, please email aroundthewell@socialcirclega.com

City Welcomes Will Brinkley as New Police Chief 🌿 Will Brinkley became Social Circle Chief of Police on May 4, replacing Jeffrey Fuesting who tendered his resignation effective April 19. Will Brinkley has over 30 years of law enforcement experience, beginning with the City of Madison Georgia Police Department in 1989, and most recently as a Captain in the Athens Clarke County Police Department, where he served for 25 years, rising from Police Officer through the ranks to Captain.

A strong proponent and practitioner of community oriented policing, Will Brinkley, throughout his career, has invested in relationships with his coworkers, his staff, and all segments of his community. Described as a genuine, transparent, person of integrity who respects people and achieves success by building long term positive relationships, he has led officers and shift supervisors through their many stages of training being attentive to their questions while putting the needs of the citizens as a top priority. We look forward to the opportunity for our citizens to get to know Chief Brinkley.

Social Circle Ranked 24th Safest City in Georgia 🌿 Social Circle was ranked by Safewise, a pioneer in unbiased home security reviews, as the 24th safest city in Georgia. Their 2020 report of The 50 Safest Cities in Georgia, uses FBI crime report statistics from 2018 and population data to calculate the number of violent crimes and property crimes per 1,000 residents. The ranking makes Social Circle the safest city in Walton County as the only other city in Walton County that appears on the list is Loganville, with a ranking of 31. In 2019 Social Circle was ranked as the 25th safest city in Georgia.

City Budget Document Wins Award for Third Year 🌿 The City of Social Circle received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program from The Government Finance Officers Associate (GFOA) for their 2019-2020 budget document. This is the third year in a row that the City has been recognized for this award. GFOA established the Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program (Budget Awards Program) in 1984 to encourage and assist state and local governments to prepare budget documents of the very highest quality that reflect both the guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting and the GFOA's best practices on budgeting and then to recognize individual governments that succeed in achieving that goal. Thank you to Jennifer Fricks, Finance Director for her work in creating our budget document.

Council Approves Speed Limit Reduction on Alcova 🌿 At the April City Council meeting, the Mayor and Council approved the following regarding the speed limit changes that were proposed in the March work session.

- Speed limits on S Cherokee will remain as were approved in 2016, but missing and poorly located signs will be adjusted.
 - ◆ From the traffic signal to Cain Street will be posted as 25mph.
 - ◆ From 190 ft south of W Ash Street to 170 ft south of Hickory Drive will be posted as 30 mph.
 - ◆ From 950 ft south of Birch Street to 190 ft south of W Ash Street will be posted as 40 mph.
- Speed limits on Alcova Drive will be adjusted as follows:
 - ◆ From the Roundabout to Laurel Lane the speed limit will be reduced to 35 mph
 - School zone (45 minutes before the start of school for one hour, and 15 minutes before the end of school for one hour) will be posted at 25 mph.
 - ◆ From Laurel Lane to the City Limits will remain at 45 mph.

All other speed limits in the City will be left as is.

Fire Department ISO Class 2 Rating in Effect 🌿 The Fire Department has received an ISO (Insurance Services Office) Class 2 public protection classification, effective May 1, 2020. ISO is a third party independent agency that evaluates the fire department, water department and communications systems. It rates the results on a national scale from one to ten (one being the best and highest). According to ISO, its Public Protection Classification Program (PPC) plays an important role in the underwriting process with insurance companies. Most U.S. insurers report that the PPC information is used in their decision-making process when deciding what business to cover, what coverages to offer or prices to charge for personal or commercial property insurance. With a communities Class 2 rating, many insurance providers give a discount on annual insurance premiums for residences and businesses. Residents and business owners should check with your insurance companies to see how this new classification affects you.

Annual Summer Burn Ban in Effect 🌿 A ban on outdoor burning runs from May 1 through Oct 30 in 54 Georgia counties, including Walton County. The GA Forestry Commission will not issue any burn permits for hand piled brush, yard debris, or air curtain destructors. During the hot summer months, ground level ozone increases, which can negatively impact air quality and people's health. Burning yard and land clearing debris may produce smoke and particulate matter that are linked to lung and heart disease in humans. For more information, visit GaTrees.org.

Utility News

City Offers Special COVID-19 Emergency Payment Agreement

For the safety of our residents and community, to assure you can continue to practice the recommended hand washing and hygiene necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to help those who have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mayor and City Council have authorized the following:

- Suspend service cut-off in April.
- Waive administrative and late fees that would have been applied at the April utility bill due date.
- A special payment plan is available to all City utility customers who have past due balances as of April 28, 2020.
 - ♦ Allows you to stretch the repayment of your past due balance over a period of up to nine months.
 - ♦ You must complete the special COVID-19 emergency payment plan application and bring to City Hall by May 21.
 - ♦ All payments made under the agreement must be made before the monthly due date starting with the May due date or services will be cut off.

If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Fricks, Finance Director at (770) 464-6925.

No Garbage Pick-up on Memorial Day 🌿 There will be no garbage pick-up on Monday, May 25. Garbage service will be delayed by a day the rest of the week.

Downtown News

Downtown Events On Hold 🌿 Main Street continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation as it applies to future Main Street events, such as the Independence Day Celebration and Back to School Bash. We will keep the community updated as plans become more certain.

Friendship Park Phase 1 Completed 🌿 If you've driven through town you have probably seen the construction work on Friendship Park. Phase 1, consisting of walkways, the stage canopy, grass and trees are completed. Work will begin soon on Phase 2, which will include the pavillion and the roof on the stage canopy. We hope to hold a grand opening celebration when we can.

Grants Awarded to Help Local Businesses 🌿 We would like to recognize the Social Circle Main Street Commission, Social Circle Downtown Development Authority and the Social Circle Foundation for establishing grants totaling \$30k to offer relief to the businesses in our Downtown hit hardest by the COVID-19 outbreak. The DDA/Foundation grant awarded checks on Friday, May 1st and the Main Street Commission will be presenting recipients with funds on May 5th. Thank you to all of the board members and our Downtown Director, Amber McKibben for making this possible for our Downtown Businesses!

School News

Pick up and Return of Items 🌿 Families may pick up essential items left at the schools (book bags, pocketbooks, pencil cases, and binders) and drop off school resources (technology, library books, and textbooks) on Monday, May 18, through Thursday, May 21, from noon until 6 pm at each campus in a drive-through format. Each school will share specifics about the processes on their campus.

Congratulations to the 2020 Seniors!

City Calendar

Agendas for ALL meetings, regular and called, available on the city website socialcirclega.gov and at City Hall.

May 12	8:00 am	Main Street Commission Board (2nd Tue)	Church at the Grove
May 12	10:00 am	Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (2nd Tue)	[Canceled]
May 12	6:00 pm	Historic Preservation Commission (2nd Tue)	Community Room
May 20	1:00 pm	Municipal Court (3rd Wednesday)	Community Room
May 26	6:00 pm	Planning/Corridor Commission (4th Tues)	MS Activity Ctr
May 27	5:30 pm	Mayor and Council Work Session (3rd Tue) [RESCHEDULED]	MS Activity Ctr
May 27	6:30 pm	Mayor and Council Regular Meeting (3rd Tue) [RESCHEDULED]	MS Activity Ctr
May 28	6:00 pm	Tree Board (4th Thu)	Community Room
June 11	10:00 am	Downtown Development Authority (2nd Thu bi-monthly)	CH Conference Rm
July 9	8:30 am	Social Circle Development Authority (2nd Thurs in Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct)	CH Conference Rm

City Hall will be closed: **Monday, May 25**, Friday, July 3, Monday, Sept 7, Thursday, Nov 26, Friday, Nov 27, Thursday, Dec 24, Friday, Dec 25, Friday, Jan 1, 2021.

Library News

To better serve our community, we now offer both an online LIVE chat available from 11:00am-12:00pm, Monday-Friday, as well as a "Get Help" form for questions or concerns. We are also keeping our social media accounts packed with useful information, crafts, story times, book reviews, and even the occasional puppet show. Tune in on Facebook every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10:00 am for Miss Amy's live story times! If you are looking for something to read while the library is closed, all PINES library card holders have access to thousands of free audiobooks, ebooks, and magazines through RBDigital. Visit our website at azalealibraries.org/stanton.htm to access free materials, research databases, and even genealogy resources. Contact the Library if you are in need of a temporary digital card. We also encourage our patrons to take this opportunity to complete the 2020 Census form. To access the form, visit my2020census.gov Census data means to dollars for our city and county. Everyone Counts!

Utility and Tax Payment Options

Drive-thru City Hall:

Monday-Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Phone:

1-877-840-5562

Online:

socialcirclega.gov/payment-options/

Night Deposit:

24/7. **Do not deposit cash.**

Dates:

May 26 - Last day to pay to avoid cut-off

May 27 - Cut-off

May 28 - Current payment due date

May 29 - Late fees applied

Utilities cut off in error?

Call 770-464-6938

Mayor David Keener
404-713-1279 dkeener@socialcirclega.gov

District 1 Traysa Price
770-728-5893 tprice@socialcirclega.gov

District 2 Tyson Jackson
770-885-9483 tjackson@socialcirclega.gov

District 3 (vacant)

District 4 Steve Shelton
678-410-7971 jsshelton@socialcirclega.gov

City Manager Adele Schirmer
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City Clerk Susan Roper
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Police Chief Will Brinkley
770-464-2366 policechief@socialcirclega.gov

Fire Chief Ken Zaydel
770-464-0621 firechief@socialcirclega.gov

Public Works Director Jason Langley
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Finance Director Jennifer Fricks
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