



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Dec. 13, 2018

### **Georgia Meshotto retires after 36 years of Service**

*Four Mayors and Four City Managers Benefited from Her Faithful Service*

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** — Georgia Meshotto, 75, has seen a lot over the years, serving under four mayors and four city managers since she arrived at City Hall, November 1, 1982.

Meshotto is the Italian name she acquired from her husband, Joe. They've been happily married for 55 years. She proudly tells people that she's a fourth Italian and three quarters Greek. Her grandparents on both sides immigrated from Greece and she's not ashamed to say that the 2002 comedy drama "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," featuring the Portokalos family and starring Nia Vardalos, is allowed at her house.

Meshotto could have retired years ago but continued to work into her 70s. Her father retired in his 70s as president of Doerr Electric, a division of Grainger Company. Her mother lived until age 92.

Arriving at City Hall in 1982, it was an election year. Roger Haley, who would become City Manager, was serving on the City Council. Ronald Reagan was president. At the time, she was earning \$7.50 an hour working part-time as a Secretary processing payroll for Home Roofing Company. Owner and then City Councilman Joe Jackson, who became Mayor in 1983, told Georgia there was a job opening in the City Tax Department.

"I was a bit disappointed to learn that the job only paid \$5.00 an hour," said Meshotto. "But at that time, I had no health insurance and no pension where I worked. The City offered both benefits."

Meshotto interviewed with City Recorder John Barber and accepted the full-time job right during the middle of tax season. She had been busy raising three children, but the time was right as Mark, Rodney and Kimberly were all either in high school or graduated. Today, Mark, 55, is an SRO for the Rutherford County Sheriff's Department; Rodney, 53, works for Mars Petcare in Franklin, and Kimberly, 46, a homemaker, works at St. Michael's Catholic School in Massachusetts. Georgia and Joe have five adult grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

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“In 1982 John Barber wrote up the minutes from the City Council meetings then I typed the minutes, so they could be taped into large books for archiving,” said Meshotto.

By 1984, she attended the meetings herself. Minutes were recorded so she could listen to the audio, type the minutes at her desk, then add them to the books. As she prepares to retire after 36 years of service, Meshotto can reflect on the importance of “being a tree that bends,” as she likes to say it. Since 2014, she has prepared the City Council agenda electronically, making sure the agenda is ordered and book marked in PDF—all 40 to 500 pages depending on the work before the Council.

“The City has been a great place to work despite the many changes at City Hall,” Meshotto laments. “When I started it was one big family but it's less a family and more a business today. Bringing in people from the outside has brought good ideas but Murfreesboro happened before they came here.”

It's Meshotto's way of saying that some of the old ideas were good ones too. They got the City where it became an attractive and growing place for people from outside. In fact, she was an outsider once herself, moving to Murfreesboro in 1957 from Sycamore, Illinois, outside Chicago. At age 15, her father transferred to Murfreesboro to work as an engineer for General Electric, which was located off Broad Street.

She vividly remembers traveling to Murfreesboro on a train from Chicago to Union Station in Nashville. To this day she loves old trains. In 1957, City Hall operated where the current Murfreesboro Fire Rescue office is located on Broad Street. The James K. Polk Hotel was still standing before demolition in 1977. Meshotto also fondly recalls the Princess Theater and Frost Top, a popular root beer stand near Lytle and Broad Street.

The oldest of four children, Georgia Mathews (her maiden name) attended Central High School, graduating in 1961. While in high school, Meshotto worked at Grabers, a department store on the Square, but wanted to become a nurse. It wasn't to be, however.

“I purposely failed the nursing test to avoid going to Nashville because I wanted to be with my boyfriend,” Joseph Meshotto, who was going to MTSU. Georgia attended MTSU from 1961-62.

Prior to working at City Hall, Meshotto worked for Samsonite, a luggage and furniture company, and for Murfreesboro Medical Clinic before landing at Home Roofing on Castle Street. Joe B. Jackson was one of the owners. From 1968 to 1982, Meshotto worked part-time for Jackson who served on the Council and as Mayor from 1983-1998.

Meshotto served under Mayors Jackson, Richard Reeves, Tommy Bragg and current Mayor Shane McFarland. She has also worked with city managers Clyde Fite, Roger Haley, Rob Lyons and Craig Tindall.

Born May 26, 1943, in Madison, Wisconsin, she also lived in Racine, Wisconsin, Chicago, and Chicago suburbs Melrose Park and Sycamore, Illinois before settling in Murfreesboro. Meshotto has been a longtime member of St. Rose Catholic Church and plans to spend

retirement going to the lake house at Center Hill, fishing, gardening and working around her home. "That's my pride and joy," she says with confidence.

On Dec. 17, 2018, the City will honor Meshotto with a special retirement reception from 1:30-3:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. All of us at City Hall wish her the very best in retirement.

*For City News online, visit [www.Murfreesborotn.gov](http://www.Murfreesborotn.gov).*

**Photo attached:**

1. *L/R Georgia Meshotto and Mayor Shane McFarland.jpg*
2. *Georgia Meshotto prepares minutes for City Council.jpg*
3. *City Council Minutes books.jpg*

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