

MINUTES

FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 16, 2010

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Mr. Hansford gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present for the meeting was Mayor Tye Howard, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, James Calloway, Desi Hansford, Eric Wilson, and Melvin Lawrence. Also present was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Administrator, Greg Popham; and City Clerk, Janice Hall.

Councilmember Jo Anna Banks was out of town and unable to attend the meeting; therefore, all unanimous votes will be five (5) votes (Dodd, Calloway, Hansford, Wilson, and Lawrence).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2010 COUNCIL MEETING

Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2010 council meeting. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - FORSYTHIA FESTIVAL – KAREN MANUS-PENNINGS

Mrs. Tiffany Andrews, Chamber of Commerce, reviewed the upcoming Forsythia Festival and called on Mrs. Karen Manus-Pennings, Chamber Tourism Director, to review specific events and changes associated with the festival. Mrs. Manus-Pennings stated that a Forsythia Committee meeting was held in October and it was determined then that the festival needed to be moved from the square due to the impending construction for Streetscape. Mrs. Manus-Pennings stated that the festival would be held on Johnston Street between Lee Street and the railroad and passed out maps and brochures of the festival to council. Mr. Dodd stated that he was not aware until two weeks ago that the festival had been moved and that he is appalled that the Chamber would move the festival when council has assured them all along that the City would work around any construction that may be underway during the festival so that the festival could remain on the square. Mrs. Andrews apologized that they did not come

before full council to make them aware of the move, but made the decision in October based on the information that they had then. Mayor Howard stated that he was aware that the decision had been made to move the festival after several postponements in the possible start date of the Streetscape project. The Mayor also stated that he did know that they needed firm information in October and at that time the City was hopeful that we would be under construction in February. The Mayor also stated that he was unaware that all members of Council were not aware of the relocation plans. Mrs. Manus-Pennings stated that they had to keep the safety of the vendors and patrons in mind when discussing the possibility of the square being under construction during the festival. Mrs. Andrews stated that there is no intent to keep the festival off the square and only moved the festival this year to make the best of a decision that had to be made months in advance.

Mr. Calloway offered a motion to close Johnston Street from Lee Street to the railroad on March 13-14, 2010 for the Forsythia Festival. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried with four (4) votes for (Calloway, Hansford, Wilson, and Lawrence) and one (1) vote against (Dodd). Mr. Wilson stated that he knew about the decision to move the festival in October as it was announce at a business owners meeting he attended.

APPOINTMENTS TO DDA BOARD

Mr. Wilson stated that the Public Affairs Committee met and discussed the candidates for the vacancies on the DDA Board. There are three vacancies: one for reappointment of Mrs. Lena Jones, one for a 4-year term to fill the vacancy left by Dr. Trellis Baker asking not to be reappointed, and one for the fulfillment of the resignation of Art Rauschers' term which expires December 2010. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to reappoint Mrs. Lena Jones to the DDA Board. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARD OF HEALTH

Mayor Howard reviewed the requirements for the Board of Health appointment and stated that Dr. Grant had asked him to serve and to reappoint Mrs. Libby Perry to the Board of Health. The new appointment is to replace Mr. Lamar Russell who resigned December 2009 when his term as city council member expired. There was discussion as to the length of term for the appointments. Mr. Popham stated that he would get the

information together and place it in the council member's mailboxes. Mr. Wilson offered a motion to appoint Mayor Howard and Libby Perry to the Board of Health. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR APPROVAL OF BEER & WINE PACKAGE LICENSE FOR WAL-MART NEW LOCATION AT 180 N. LEE STREET

Mayor Howard opened the public hearing for comments for or against the approval of a beer and wine package license for the new Wal-Mart location at 180 N. Lee Street. Mr. Melton reviewed the application stating that this matter first came before council on January 19th; was properly advertised in the February 3rd and 10th issues of the Reporter; and is for a change in location as the current location has had a beer and wine package license for several years. Mr. Melton stated that this is for a retail beer and wine package license for 180 N. Lee Street. Mrs. Hall stated that an alcohol license is location specific therefore Wal-mart must apply for a new license at their new location. Mrs. Hall stated that a favorable fingerprint report has been received on the manager of the store. Hearing no further comments for or against the approval of the license, Mayor Howard closed the public hearing. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the beer and wine package license for Wal-mart at 180 N. Lee Street. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION TO CLOSE A PORTION OF CHURCH STREET AND CONVEY SAID PROPERTY TO THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Mr. Melton stated that the First Baptist Church had previously sent a letter requesting to close the portion of Church Street between W. Morse Street and W. King Street. Mr. Melton stated that this portion of Church Street was made one-way a couple of years ago. Mr. Melton stated that the First Baptist Church owns the property surrounding this section of the street. Mr. Melton stated that included in the Resolution to close a portion of Church Street, are stipulations that the First Baptist Church has agreed to. Those stipulations are that the Church will be responsible for all closing costs; the Church will have the sole responsibility, liability, and cost for moving any utilities now or in the future; and new curbing must be installed and be consistent with the City's existing curbing and storm drain requirements. Mr. Melton stated that a letter has been

received from the Church agreeing to these stipulations. Mr. Melton stated that the purchase price for this portion of Church Street will be \$3,000. Mr. Calloway offered a motion to approve the Resolution to close Church Street between W. Morse Street and W. King Street including the stipulations within the Resolution for a purchase price of \$3,000. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried with four (4) votes for (Calloway, Hansford, Wilson, and Lawrence) and one (1) abstention (Dodd due to a conflict as he is a member of the First Baptist Church).

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. Popham reported on the following projects:

James Street – Mr. Popham reviewed the surplus funds on the CDBG project. Mr. Popham stated there will be approximately \$92,000 in savings. Mr. Popham stated that the City should use a portion of this savings for improvements on Railroad Avenue and that DCA has approved City monies spent on Railroad Avenue as the matching portion of the CDBG grant. Mr. Popham stated that the improvements for sidewalks and road improvements will cost approximately \$43,000. Mr. Popham stated that the City match will come from SPLOST funds. Mr. Popham stated that once the James Street project and improvements to Railroad Avenue are complete, he will go back to DCA for housing improvement grant funding.

DOT – LARP – Mr. Popham stated that LARP funding is available again and DOT has advised that they will be resurfacing Parsons Street from MLK Drive to Sharp Street. Mr. Popham stated that council needs to be thinking about roadways that they want to submit to DOT for 2011 LARP.

Public Utility Committee Meeting – Mr. Popham reviewed the Public Utilities Committee meeting. Mr. Popham stated that the City currently only has one water treatment facility online and that is the Russellville Water Treatment Plant. Mr. Popham stated that the Boxankle Plant has not been in operation for several years. Mr. Popham stated that the City needs to bring the Boxankle Plant back online and also need a secondary source of water for the Boxankle Plant. Mr. Popham has met with Mr. Elmo Richardson and Mr. Garry Garretson to review what needs to be done to bring the Boxankle Plant back online. Mr. Popham is working with them to obtain a withdrawal permit for the Little Towaliga River as a secondary source of water for the Boxankle

Plant. Mr. Popham stated that Mr. Richardson and Mr. Garretson have agreed to work on the withdrawal permit with a cap of \$6,000 for time and material. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to enter into a contract with Mr. Richardson and Mr. Garretson not to exceed \$6,000 for the permitting process. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion to allow for discussion. Mr. Wilson asked what the cost would be to bring the plant back into operation once the permit is in place. Mr. Popham reviewed some of the work that would be required and stated that the cost estimate in 2006 was \$1.4 million. Mr. Popham stated that 30 to 45 days after the permit is obtained, we should be able to get cost to bring back online and begin working on funding. Mr. Dodd stated that having both water treatment plants is good for the long-term health of the City water system and we need a redundant system. Mr. Calloway stated the plant was closed due to not enough water supply. Mr. Popham stated that this is a good opportunity to talk with the County to make them our largest wholesale customer and water withdrawal permits are going to get harder to obtain. Mr. Melton stated that the name of the engineering firm needs to be corrected. The motion carried unanimously.

Capital Improvement Plan – Mr. Popham stated that a 5-year capital improvement plan will be developed soon. Mr. Popham stated that even with the capital improvement plan there will always be unforeseen matters that come up such as the roadways to the lift stations. Mr. Popham stated that Mr. Barry Walker drove him around to all of the lift stations last week and all of the roadways to the lift stations are in need of repair and some of them are impassable. Mr. Popham stated that estimated repairs to the roadways to the Benson Ham L.S., South Plant L.S., Union Hill L.S., and the Holiday Inn L.S. will be \$22,000. Mr. Popham stated that these repairs can be paid from the SPLOST revenues. Mr. Popham stated that he is requesting permission to move forward on repair of these sewer lift station access roadway areas as an emergency repair as soon as the weather is permitting. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to move forward with the repairs and the appropriation of the SPLOST funds. Mr. Calloway seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson asked what the procedure is for bidding and at whose discretion repairs are deemed as emergency? Mr. Popham stated that the City has the ability to negotiate professional services. Mr. Dodd stated that in a normal situation these repairs would be bid out and but this is being looked at as an emergency and we need to move forward as soon as

possible and cannot wait on advertising for bids. There was discussion concerning the bid process. Mr. Melton stated that if this is deemed an emergency, the City can move forward, but if not an emergency, an informal bid process can be conducted even by phone with request for estimates. The motion carried unanimously.

Census – Mr. Popham stated that a memo has been placed in each council member’s mailbox regarding the Census. Mr. Popham asked that everyone publicize the importance of the census and the importance of returning the census forms once they are received.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MR. DODD

Mr. Dodd reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 and offered a motion to approve the water department committee totals of \$11,944.42 and the electric department committee totals of \$2,544.19. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dodd stated that he wanted to commend the electric department for their work Friday night during the snow.

MR. CALLOWAY

Mr. Calloway reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the police department committee totals of \$1,573.06 and the fire department committee totals of \$1,562.93. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Calloway stated that as of today, 22 applications have been received for the Police Chief position. Mr. Calloway stated that applications will close at the end of February.

Mr. Calloway stated that the fire department has already obtained 156 hours of training for 2010.

MR. HANSFORD

Mr. Hansford reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the administrative department committee totals of \$3,045.68. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hansford offered a motion to approve the cable department committee totals of \$536.39. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

MR. WILSON

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the cemetery department committee totals of \$44.85. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the BHT department committee totals of \$1,326.29. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson reviewed the Parks/Recreation Committee meeting stating that the committee reviewed pool construction, design, and location. Mr. Popham stated that he presented a slide show on potential water park designs and that he is working with pool contractors on the possible designs for a pool and/or water park. Mr. Dodd asked if the master plan is still being worked on. Mr. Popham stated that the master plan is for the connecting of the parks but not the design of the pool. Mr. Wilson stated that SPLOST money is designated for pool and recreation and cannot be spent to lower taxes or on anything other than recreation. Mayor Howard stated that bike trails or sidewalks need to be a key feature in drawing residents and businesses to town. Mr. Wilson stated that the committee is trying to design a water feature for everyone not just for children.

Mr. Wilson stated that the boundary survey of the cemetery is almost complete.

Mr. Wilson stated that he and Mr. Popham road to the Capital with the Leadership Monroe Class last week and took the opportunity to discuss various issues with the group.

MR. LAWRENCE

Mr. Lawrence reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the public works department committee totals of \$5,803.59. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he is glad we are getting some roads paved this year with LARP money. Mr. Lawrence stated that the City submits a list of roads to DOT for paving each year but DOT is the one that decides which streets are paved.

Mr. Lawrence stated that the Public Works Committee will meet on Wednesday, February 24th at 11:00 am.

MR. MELTON

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

ADDITIONAL NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Ben Thomason came forward and stated that he is a member of this year's Leadership Monroe Class and is attending tonight's meeting as one of the requirements of the class. Mr. Thomason commended the council on the way they conduct their meetings and that they follow parliamentary procedures. Mr. Thomason works for Central Georgia EMC and also is a member of the Utilities Protection Committee and invited council to attend their monthly meetings.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk