

MINUTES
FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 6, 2010

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Mrs. Banks gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present for the meeting was Mayor Tye Howard, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Jo Anna Banks, 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 15, 2010 COUNCIL MEETING

Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2010 council meeting as written. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

VALERIE GRIER – DISCUSSION RELATING TO A CITY POOL

Mrs. Valerie Grier read a prepared statement (copy attached) relating to the recent drowning of Dominique Davis at a hotel pool and the need for a city pool for a safe place for children in Forsyth to swim.

Mr. Wilson thanked Mrs. Grier for her comments and stated that the Recreation Committee has been working on a pool for quite some time and has made great progress since January of this year. Mr. Wilson stated that during the last Recreation Committee meeting, Mr. Popham was instructed to write a RFP for a pool contractor. Mr. Wilson stated that the committee is looking to build a year-round facility with the SPLOST money designated for recreation. The next committee meeting will be July 14th and the proposed RFP will be presented to the committee at that time. There was discussion as to when the pool would be constructed, the types of pool being looked at, and the steps to be taken before construction can begin. Mrs. Grier recognized Dominique's parents who were in attendance for the meeting and Mayor Howard conveyed condolences to his parents as did members of the council. Mr. Wilson stated that the Recreation Committee holds regularly scheduled meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at noon and encouraged the public to attend to let the committee know what the citizens want.

REVIEW REPORT AND EVIDENCE FILED BY THE BUILDING OFFICIAL ON SEVERAL PROPERTIES LOCATED IN THE CITY TO DETERMINE REASONABLE CAUSE TO ORDER A HEARING TO MAKE A FINAL DETERMINATION THAT A BUILDING IS UNSAFE

Mr. Popham reviewed the four properties that are currently being looked at as unsafe and reviewed the process that has been followed up to this point and Council was presented the written reports of the Building Official. Mr. Popham stated that none of these properties are occupied. Mrs. Banks offered a motion to move forward with the process to determine that these buildings are unsafe. The motion was seconded by Mr. Calloway. Mayor Howard stated that this is a great way to instruct property owners that properties must be cleaned up. Mrs. Banks stated that a list of contractors is being put together to provide to property owners as information for demolition and/or repair work. Mrs. Banks stated that these types of buildings are detrimental to our children and it will be better for them if these type houses are removed. Mr. Popham asked that the motion be revised to include the hearing date. Mrs. Banks revised her motion to include the public hearing to be held during the council meeting on August 17, 2010 for the determination that these buildings are unsafe. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Lawrence stated that there are more unsafe houses than these four and Mr. Popham stated that these are just a start on all of the houses that need to be worked on.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION AND LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR POTEMKIN DEVELOPMENT LOCATED ON HIGHWAY 42 NORTH FOR THEIR APPLICATION TO DCA – PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ON MAY 19, 2009

Mr. Bill Collins, Potemkin Development, addressed council and stated that they applied for the tax credits last year with DCA but did not get the award and is before council tonight to ask for a Resolution and Letter of Support so that they can reapply this year for the tax credits with DCA. Mr. Popham stated that he reviewed the agreement that was in place last year stating that the developer will bear all cost for the upgrade of the sewer lift station and the installation of a sewer line from the lift station to the proposed development. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the Resolution and Letter

of Support for the Potemkin Development. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION TO CLOSE INGRAM DRIVE AND DEED THE PROPERTY TO THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY OF MONROE COUNTY

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the Resolution to close Ingram Drive and deed the property to the Hospital Authority of Monroe County as part of the Hospital's expansion project. Mr. Hansford seconded the motion. Mr. Melton reviewed the plans that the Hospital Authority has for the property and stated that the property was originally deeded to the City in the 1940's. This is an unimproved drive without sidewalks or curb. Mr. Melton stated that the County has before them tonight a Resolution to reject any rights to the property since the County-owned health Center is on adjacent property. Mr. Melton stated that all houses that were located on Ingram Drive have been removed. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. Popham offered the following report:

- Land and Water Grant pre-application was approved. This is a 50/50 matching grant of \$100,000 for improvements to Kynette Park.
- The additional information for the Timberlake Retreat requested by the County Commissioners was delivered to Mr. Larry Evans today.
- UGA will be here this Friday to review the Charter revisions that council asked for.
- Check received today from AT&T for \$78,000± for prior year's pole attachment fees. Mr. Popham commended Mr. Johnny Hodges, Electrical Superintendent, for his work in getting this completed. Mr. Popham stated that this money will be used to build the shed for the electric department vehicles and a pad for the transformers.
- Utility Partners prepared water distribution maps for the Chamber several months ago and those are being updated. Mr. Popham has requested a proposal from Stantec for equipment that will locate the lines from the hydrant to the valves. Mr. Popham stated that Utility Partners has ordered a GPS unit which is the same type unit used by the MGRC.

- Mrs. Banks asked for an update on Streetscape. Mr. Popham stated that DOT was in town today. Mrs. Hall stated that the contractor is setting up their staging area this week and bringing in their temporary fencing for the equipment area. Mr. Wilson stated that a 2-hour parking limit was discussed at the preconstruction meeting and asked where we stand on that. Mr. Melton stated that this can be done by Resolution unless enforcement is required and then it would require an ordinance. Mr. Melton stated that we may need DOT permission to enforce a parking limit on Lee Street and Main Street. Mr. Wilson offered a motion to establish a Resolution to discourage unnecessary parking on Johnston Street and Jackson Street and to forward the Resolution to the County offices and request that they find alternate parking beginning July 12, 2010. Mrs. Banks seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson stated that the Resolution will help merchants during construction if the suggestion is adhered to, and if it is not, then council should consider adopting an ordinance. Mrs. Banks stated that the courts need to include a flyer in their notice to jurors and subpoenas advising them to park off the square. Mayor Howard stated that Mr. Howell Newton has verbally agreed to allow parking in the lot behind the old Royal Palm Restaurant, but we need to see what needs to be done to make that happen. Mr. Wilson thanked Mrs. Hall for the weekly emails updating the merchants on the project and stated that communication is the key to the success of the project. Mr. Popham reviewed a parking ordinance already on the books that could alleviate the problem on a temporary basis. Mr. Wilson stated that he still wants to go with the Resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MR. DODD

Mr. Dodd reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the water department committee totals of \$14,624.63 and the electric department committee totals of \$9,150.62. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried with five (5) votes for (Dodd, Calloway, Hansford, Wilson, and Lawrence) and one (1) abstention (Banks due to stepson one of the vendors).

Mr. Dodd reviewed the proposals presented at today's work session from Mr. Elmo Richardson and Mr. Garry Garretson. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to move forward with the time and material proposal for the renewal withdrawal water permits for Rocky Creek and Tobesofkee Creek, the \$27,500 for the withdrawal permit for Towaliga River, and the \$42,050 for the plans to rehab Boxankle Plant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lawrence. Mrs. Banks asked if these projects were bid out and Mr. Dodd responded that Mr. Richardson and Mr. Garretson were two of the principle designers at Stantec but they are no longer with the company, and Mr. Richardson was the designer for the Boxankle Plant when it was originally built. Mr. Dodd stated that we are blessed with a good water system now and that water will be the key to successful growth. Mr. Wilson stated that he thought the withdrawal permit application work was already approved by council. Mrs. Hall stated that a not to exceed \$6,000 proposal was approved by council for that permit process, and the application was submitted to EPD; however, EPD requested additional information that will take much more in-depth work to complete. Mr. Wilson stated that these are three separate issues and that he supports the renewal of the existing withdrawal permits, and might support the other two issues with additional discussion and explanation. There was discussion concerning the importance of all three proposals. Mr. Popham stated that the rehab of the Boxankle Plant was proposed 5 years ago but never acted upon. Mr. Popham stated that the City Ordinances provide that professional services can be negotiated without submittal of an RFP or bids. Mr. Popham stated that this is costly but the knowledge of these two gentlemen goes back to the actual building of the plant. Mr. Popham stated that EPD requires that additional information before any determination can be made on the withdrawal permit request for Towaliga River. The motion carried unanimously.

MRS. BANKS

Mrs. Banks asked the status of the 5-year water/sewer plan. Mr. Dodd stated that we just approved the beginning of that work with the approval of the proposals from Mr. Richardson and Mr. Garretson. Mr. Dodd stated that we have a "wish list" but not a formal plan.

Mrs. Banks reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the public affairs committee totals of \$4,201.25. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Banks commended the BHT department and volunteers for a job well done on the fireworks display. Mrs. Banks stated that she hopes the activities can be expanded to include downtown prior to the fireworks next year.

Mrs. Banks stated that the City will hold a Town Hall meeting at 5:45 PM on Tuesday, July 20, 2010. Discussion will include the Urban Redevelopment Plan.

Mrs. Banks reviewed the article in the GMA Newsletter regarding discount website offers for employees.

Mrs. Banks stated that the next Public Affairs Committee meeting will be Thursday, July 15th at noon.

MR. CALLOWAY

Mr. Calloway recognized Chief Corley and asked when the new police cars would arrive. Chief Corley stated that they should be online by next week.

Mr. Calloway stated that he is glad to see that we are working on the dilapidated housing issue.

Mr. Calloway reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the fire department committee totals of \$552.35 and the police department committee totals of \$94,672.78. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Banks asked the status of the new fire chief search. Mr. Calloway stated that a meeting will be held with the county to discuss a joint fire department in the next couple of weeks. Mrs. Banks asked if Chief Carter would be remaining until a new chief is appointed since his interim time has expired. Mr. Calloway offered a motion to appoint Walter Carter as the interim fire chief for an additional 90 days. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

MR. HANSFORD

Mr. Hansford reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the administrative department committee totals of \$11,571.97 and the

cable department committee totals of \$431.36. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hansford stated that the cable system review requested by the committee from Mr. Popham is less than 90 days away and asked for a status report. Mr. Popham stated that he has a meeting this week with Mr. Paul Williams to gather additional information that he needs to complete the report.

Mr. Hansford stated that a mid-year budget review and 2009 audit review will be scheduled in the near future.

MR. WILSON

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the recreation department committee totals of \$158 and the cemetery department committee totals of \$257.05. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson stated that the next Parks, Recreation, & Cemetery committee meeting will be at noon on Wednesday, July 13th. There was discussion as to whether council would be back from the conference in time for that meeting. The meeting was changed to 11:00 am on Thursday, July 14th.

Mr. Wilson reviewed the class he attended at the recent GMA Annual Convention.

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 \$5,958.62. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lawrence asked the status of the Methane Recovery Project at the landfill. Mr. Popham stated that all hard data has been gathered and that approximately 225 kWh could be generated from the methane. Mayor Howard stated that we are still looking at options for power generation but he has not received a recent update on the project.

Mr. Lawrence reviewed the class he attended at the recent GMA Annual Convention.

ADDITIONAL OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Dodd stated that the minutes of the last meeting show that DGOT will do the striping on Main Street. Mr. Lawrence stated that Mr. Randall is working on getting the

temporary striping done while the Streetscape Project is being completed. Mr. Popham stated that conflicting information was received from GDOT regarding the striping with on representative stating that they would do the striping and another stating that GDOT no longer does striping on state roadways.

ADDITIONAL NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Banks stated that Sunset Terrace is being resurfaced in this year's LARP. Mrs. Banks stated that LARP has been changed to LMRI and is due by July 31st. Mrs. Banks stated that she would like to see all council members be allowed to turn in streets for resurfacing. Mayor Howard stated that there is a list that was sent in several years ago that DOT is still working off of.

Mr. Don Daniels addressed council and stated that he was not present at the beginning of the meeting, but usually council begins with a prayer and not the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Daniels asked why the council does not say the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Howard stated that it is just something that has not been done but in no way is an aspersion to the pledge. Mr. Daniels stated that the aspersion is shown with the lack of the pledge.

Mr. Jim Peters, Monroe County Commissioner, addressed council and stated that he would like to see the City and County work together on a headquarters for the county fire department and a ladder truck for the city fire department and possibly do a swap. Mr. Peters stated that the departments do not have to be combined just housed in the same building. Mayor Howard stated that the City needs a ladder truck and he has watched the one work that the County now has. Mayor Howard stated that the vehicles that the fire department has been looking at are at least \$500,000. Mr. Calloway stated that the public safety committee will meet in the next week to discuss the issue.

Mr. Calloway offered a motion be begin all council meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk