

## **MINUTES**

### **FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2010**

#### **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Dodd 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 AUGUST 17, 2010 COUNCIL MEETING**

Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2010 council meeting as written. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, the motion carried unanimously.

#### **APPROVAL AND PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION NAMING SEPTEMBER AS CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the proclamation naming September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously. Mayor Howard read the proclamation and presented a framed copy of the proclamation to several children and their families who reside in Monroe County and also have cancer.

#### **APPROVAL OF VENDOR AGREEMENT APPLICATION FROM THE GA. DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM NAMING THE CITY AS A VENDOR**

Mrs. Hall reviewed the application stating that the City has been a vendor with the Department of Human Services, Energy Assistance Program for several years and the Department requires each vendor to resubmit an application every three years. Mrs. Hall stated that being a vendor for the Department of Human Services allows for energy assistance checks to be remitted directly to the City rather than to the customer. Mrs. Banks offered a motion to approve the submittal of the application. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

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

Mr. Popham reviewed the reports of the four properties and stated that this is a continuation of the request by council to clean up the dilapidated houses in Forsyth. Mr. Popham stated that the condition of these houses was brought to his attention by a citizen complaint. Mr. Popham stated that the City Zoning Officer and City Building Inspector have inspected the properties and submitted their reports to council. Mr. Popham stated that these properties are before council tonight to determine if a public hearing is warranted. Mr. Wilson asked if any of the houses are inhabited and Mr. Popham stated that they are not. Mr. Calloway offered a motion to hold a public hearing on all four properties to determine if they are unsafe. Seconded by Mrs. Banks the motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE CONSENT OF THE CITY ADOPTING THE SUPPLEMENTAL BOND RESOLUTION OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF THE EXCESS MONEY IN THE DEBT SERVICE RESERVE ACCOUNT TO THE CITY**

Mr. Popham reviewed a memo he had provided to council and the packet of information provided in the council packets. Mr. Popham stated that the Supplemental Bond Resolution will recover \$174,092.27 which is in the Debt Service Reserve Account associated with the Downtown Development Authority Cable Bond. Mr. Popham stated that the Forsyth Downtown Development Authority approved to execute the Supplemental Bond Resolution at their August meeting. Mr. Popham stated that this surplus will be returned to the City now and any future excess will be applied to the principle on the bond. Mr. Popham stated that the last step in the process is to authorize the Mayor to sign the Consent of the City Adopting the Supplemental Bond Resolution. Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Consent of the City. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hansford. Mr. Dodd asked if the funds will be deposited into the General Fund and if they are earmarked for a specific project. Mr.

Popham stated that the money will be used to fund the methane extraction system at the landfill. Mr. Popham stated that the project is estimated to cost \$140,000. Mayor Howard stated that the money will be deposited into the cable fund and then used as council deems necessary. Mr. Popham stated that this is unencumbered funds. Mr. Melton stated that the Amendments states that the money will go to the General Fund or as otherwise directed by the City. The motion carried unanimously.

## **PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE 2010 MILLAGE RATE**

### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Mayor Howard opened the public hearing for comments for or against the adoption of the proposed 2010 millage rate. Mr. Melton stated that the 5-year history was properly advertised in the August 1<sup>st</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup> issues of the Reporter. Mrs. Hall reviewed the 5-year history provided to council in their packets stating that the tax digest figures have changed and the proposed 5.60 mils will further reduce the anticipated tax collections by approximately \$4,000 for a total reduction from last year's estimates of approximately \$14,000. Mr. Wilson stated that this is the lowest millage rate the City has had for over 5 years. Hearing no further comments for or against the approval of the millage rate, Mayor Howard closed the public hearing. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to set the 2010 millage rate at 5.60 mils. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Mr. Popham offered the following report:

- Derelict Signs – Mr. Popham stated that seven letters were sent out to property owners and three responses have been received. Mr. Melton will send out follow-up letters to the four property owners that have not responded.
- Streetscape – Mr. Popham reviewed a meeting held with the constitutional officers in the courthouse regarding parking during the Streetscape project. Mr. Popham stated that Mayor Howard is working with Mr. Newton for the lease of the parking lot behind the old Royal Palm Restaurant and that lot will be offered to the county employees as alternate parking during the project.
- Streetscape – Mr. Popham stated that he has contacted G-DOT regarding the redesign requested by one of the business owners and they were not receptive of

the request. Mr. Popham stated that crews have been added by the contractor to work on both sides of the street due to being behind schedule. Mr. Popham stated that he is working with the contractor on an updated timeline.

- Land/Water Conservation Grant – Mr. Popham stated that he has not received word yet as to whether the City will be receiving the grant.
- Timberlake Ministries water project – Mr. Popham stated that the topographical work is complete.

### **CITY CLERK REPORT**

Mrs. Hall offered the following update on the Streetscape Project:

- The curb and gutter on the courthouse side of Jackson Street has been poured; steps beside City Hall have been completed; all crepe myrtles on Jackson Street have been removed and transplanted. Work to continue this week includes pouring the sidewalk on the Courthouse side of Jackson Street; will put down gravel this week in front of City Hall and Russellville Management to reopen the front entrances; will bore Main Street/Jackson Street intersection either this week or week after next; continue installing the conduit under the sidewalk; demo the sidewalk in front of Smart Shoppes; and received stamped approved drawings from DOT today for the mast arms.

Mrs. Hall stated that all department heads have been trained on the hiperweb purchase order system, and she will need to get with the elected officials that were unable to attend the training.

Mrs. Hall reminded everyone of Taste of Monroe September 23<sup>rd</sup> and Business After Hours September 16<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Hall stated that a copy of a bulletin from the State Ethics Commission has been placed in everyone's mailbox along with information regarding a training workshop to be held in Warner Robins on the changes SB 17 has made to the way disclosure forms are filed with the State Ethics Commission.

### **CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **MR. DODD**

Mr. Dodd reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the electric department committee totals of \$5,971.46 and the water department committee totals of \$61,099.43. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dodd stated that the contract with the DOC and GRWA have previously been discussed but not approved because council needed to review the contract with GRWA before approving the DOC contract. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to remove the contract with DOC from the table for discussion. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Popham stated that he received a copy of the GRWA contract today and placed a copy of the contract with each council packet. Mr. Dodd stated that the key point is who bears the responsibility of the sludge once it has been removed and that is spelled out in the DOC contract but not in the GRWA contract. Mr. Melton stated that a timeframe for completion does not appear to be in either contract. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the GRWA contract pending a favorable review by the City Attorney. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dodd asked if G-DOT was contacted prior to the request to move Phase III of the Streetscape from Lee Street to Johnston Street/Tift College Drive. Mr. Popham stated that he contact DOT by phone the day after council approved a motion to move the grant. Mr. Popham stated that DOT requested a letter from the City requesting the change stating the reason for the change and the scope of the changes. Mr. Popham stated that he received a call from Mr. Jim Cole regarding the request and Mr. Cole stated that the decision to approve the change is at his sole discretion. Mr. Popham stated that he is wafting on Mr. Cole's response to the letter he submitted requesting the change. Mr. Dodd stated that if he had known that DOT had not been contacted regarding the request to move the grant, he would not have been in favor of the motion to move the grant. Mrs. Banks stated that she was aware that council had to ask DOT to move the grant but wanted a consensus of council before the request was made. Mrs. Banks stated that Lee Street needs more work than Johnston Street.

Mr. Dodd asked for an update on Railroad Avenue. Mr. Popham stated that the powerline has been removed the Railroad Avenue and the survey work is complete. Mr. Popham stated that the railroad right-of-way is wide enough except at the Church property and Mr. George Willis property. Mr. Popham stated that the required easements should be received in 10 to 15 days and will be able to move forward then. Mr. Popham stated that the City will only need someone to do the asphalt work. Mr. Dodd asked who drew the plans and Mr. Popham stated that shop drawings are being used. Mr. Popham stated that no curb or gutter will be installed due to the Railroad not allowing major changes to the roadway. Mr. Popham stated that all of Railroad Avenue is in the railroad right-of-way. There was a discussion regarding the changes that the Railroad will allow and those changes are only maintenance changes within the right-of-way. Mrs. Banks asked if the sidewalk is on the Church side of the roadway, why curb and gutters cannot be put on that side of the roadway and Mr. Popham stated that there is not enough money, there is only \$40,000 remaining from the James Street project to be used on this project.

**MRS. BANKS**

Mrs. Banks reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the better hometown department committee totals of \$2,575.61. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Banks stated that the regularly scheduled public affairs committee meeting will be rescheduled to September 16<sup>th</sup> at noon.

Mrs. Banks stated that the role of the public affairs committee is outreach and she and Mrs. Joan Heath, DOC, have begun working together to maximize input back and forth.

**MR. CALLOWAY**

Mr. Calloway asked Chief Corley if he had anything to report and Chief Corley stated that he did not.

Mr. Calloway reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the fire department committee totals of \$1,488.73 and the police department committee totals of \$21,300.28. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, 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 \$5,747.18; the court department committee totals of \$53; and the cable department committee totals of \$3,816.09. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hansford stated that the administrative committee needs to meet for a mid-year budget review.

Mr. Hansford stated that the telecommunications committee needs to meet Monday at 11:00 am.

### **MR. WILSON**

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the recreation and cemetery department committee totals of \$356.45. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson reviewed the recreation committee meeting held last Thursday to review designs received from companies in response to the City RFP. Mr. Wilson stated that the City did not request bids for requested proposals. Mr. Wilson stated that the committee is using the information submitted to decide upon a design firm. Mr. Wilson stated that the committee will meet again tomorrow to review the designs again and make a presentation to the next council meeting for a firm to work with.

Mr. Wilson stated that he will be attending a cemetery association meeting the end of this week.

### **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 \$17,057.98. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lawrence stated that due to the recent work on James and College Streets several driveways not have big drop-offs that the City needs to repair. Mr. Lawrence stated that he and Mr. Calloway had received several phone calls and visited several of the homes to see what needed to be done. Several residents of the area were in attendance at the council meeting. Mrs. Tracy Willis, whose mother resides at 198 College Street, addressed council stating that the elevation of the driveway is much

higher than it was before the road work. Mr. Calloway stated that he and Mr. Lawrence told the residents that the driveways would be repaired within 30 days. Mrs. Willis also stated that now that portions of the streets are one-way, some of the residents are confused as to which way to go. Mr. Lawrence stated that he would look into the matter and make sure that it is addressed. Another resident of the area asked about the interruptions of the cable and telephone that had been experienced and when those interruptions would be complete and Mr. Lawrence stated that this should not happen anymore as the project is complete.

Mr. Dodd asked about the city/county dinner meeting and Mr. Popham stated that it will be held on September 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. Mr. Popham stated that the dinner will be sponsored by the City and he will contact the county.

Mrs. Hall stated that the contract with GRWA was approved tonight but the contract with the DOC was table at the last two meetings and never approved. Mr. Hansford offered a motion to approve the contract with the DOC for dredging services. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

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

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk