

MINUTES

FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 15, 2011

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND INVOCATION

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag. Mr. Lawrence gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present for the meeting was Mayor Howard, City Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Jo Anna Banks, James Calloway, Des Hansford, Eric Wilson, and Melvin Lawrence. Also present was City Attorney, Bobby Melton. City Clerk, Janice Hall was unable to attend the meeting and City employee, Janet Eldridge attended in her place.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1, 2011 COUNCIL MEETING

Mr. Calloway offered a motion to approve the minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

PAT CORLEY – SAVE A PET – REQUEST TO CLOSE STREET FOR NOODLES FOR POODLES APRIL 14, 2011 AND APPROVAL OF TEMPORARY ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION PERMIT

Mrs. Pat Corley came before council to request permission to close Johnston Street from Lee Street to Jackson Street and for a temporary alcohol permit for the annual Save-A-Pet fund raiser called Noodles For Poodles. Mrs. Corley asked for signs to be posted stating that the street would be closed and vehicles must be moved. Mr. Calloway stated that the police can move any barricades and let vehicles out that do not get moved before they go up. Mrs. Corley stated that they have also had wine donated to be auctioned off during the event and will need letter stating permission. Mr. Calloway offered a motion to approve the street closing and approval of the temporary alcohol permit and permit for auctioning wine during the Noodles For Poodles fund raiser. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF TOBESOFKEE AND ROCKY CREEK SURFACE WATER WITHDRAWAL PERMITS

Mr. Dodd stated that special condition #3 states that the permit is not cumulative and there was discussion that the permits should be cumulative. Mr. Pat Wright will get

with Mr. Elmo Richardson to verify this. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to accept the renewal permits. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF RENEWAL POLE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH SOUTHEASTERN WOOD POLE INSPECTORS

Mr. Randall stated that there are no changes to the agreement from previous years. Mr. Calloway offered a motion to approve the pole maintenance agreement with Southeastern Wood Pole Inspectors. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

AUTHORIZATION FOR CITY ATTORNEY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH RIGHT-OF-WAY AND EASEMENT ACQUISITION FOR TIFT COLLEGE DRIVE PROJECT

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to authorize Mr. Melton to move forward on obtaining right-of-ways and/or easement acquisitions for Tift College Drive project. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, there was a lengthy discussion regarding the right-of-ways and easements needed. Mr. Melton stated that he has been unsuccessful in obtaining maps showing dimensions of ROW on Tift College Drive. Mr. Melton reviewed easements that will be needed for the Railroad Avenue project which will connect to the Tift College project. Mrs. Banks offered a motion to authorize the city attorney to acquire ROW easements for Tift College Drive and Railroad Avenue. Mr. Calloway seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson withdrew his motion. Mr. Dodd asked about the intersection of Adams Street and Johnston Street. Mr. Melton stated that there is a plat of the Depot property and it should show that intersection. There was discussion regarding the “squaring up” of the Adams Street/Johnston Street intersection. Mrs. Banks rescinded her motion and offered a motion to authorize Mr. Melton to acquire ROW easements for Tift College Drive, Railroad Avenue, East Johnston Street, and Adams Street. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT AND RESOLUTION WITH GDOT TO PURCHASE OF TWO HYBRID VEHICLES AND ONE SEGWAY

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the agreement and adopt the resolution to purchase two hybrid vehicles and one segway. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FOR THE MIDDLE GEORGIA CLEAN AIR COALITION

Mrs. Banks offered a motion to approve the Articles of Organization for the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPENSATION OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Mayor Howard opened the public hearing for comments for or against the approval of an ordinance to amend the compensation of the mayor and council. Mr. Melton reviewed that this matter first came before council on January 18, 2011; has been properly advertised for three weeks in the Reporter; and will amend the compensation of mayor and aldermen no earlier than January 1, 2012. Mr. Melton stated that the mayor compensation will increase to \$12,500 and the aldermen compensation will increase to \$10,046. Adoption of this ordinance will repeal any ordinances in conflict with the ordinance. Hearing no further comments for or against the approval of the ordinance, Mayor Howard closed the public hearing. Mr. Hansford offered a motion to approve the ordinance amending the compensation of mayor and council. Mr. Lawrence seconded the motion. Mayor Howard stated that the articles in the Reporter have stated incorrect information regarding the amount of the compensation. Mayor Howard stated that the amounts stated are the total amounts of compensation, unlike the information in the Reporter which stated there would be an additional \$3,000 in expenses. Mayor Howard stated that the elected officials have not had an increase in over 13 years. The motion carried with five (5) votes for (Dodd, Banks, Calloway, Hansford, and Lawrence) and one (1) vote against (Wilson).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MR. LAWRENCE

Mr. Lawrence reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the parks, recreation, and cemetery department totals of \$613.78. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lawrence will be traveling to Ft. Valley tomorrow to purchase a tree to be planted on Friday, February 18th at 2:00 pm at the City Park in observance of Arbor Day.

Mr. Lawrence will be attending training with the Tree Board on February 24th.

Mr. Lawrence reminded everyone of the Town Hall meeting Monday, February 21st at 6:00 pm.

MR. WILSON

Mr. Wilson reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the police department committee totals of \$8,029.73 and the fire department committee totals of \$4,389.89. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson stated that the public safety committee reviewed the job description for the fire chief and approved the fire chief job description that has been copied to council. Mr. Wilson offered a motion from the public safety committee to accept the job description and advertise the fire chief position for 30 days. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Wilson stated that the public safety committee along with the former fire chief, Walter Carter, and a representative from the Georgia Fire Chiefs Association will review the applications and interview candidates.

MR. HANSFORD

Mr. Hansford reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the administrative department committee totals of \$2,464.63 and the telecommunications department committee totals of \$480.74. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hansford stated that acceptance of applications for City Administrator has been closed and will begin the interview process.

Mr. Hansford reminded everyone of the Town Hall meeting on February 21st at 6:00 pm to discuss the cable system and pool project.

MR. CALLOWAY

Mr. Calloway reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the electric department committee totals of \$7,089 and the water department committee totals of \$21,744.66. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

MRS. BANKS

Mrs. Banks stated that there are no invoices to approve tonight for the public affairs committee.

Mrs. Banks stated that applications will be accepted through tomorrow for the Better Hometown/Downtown Development Director position and then the review process will begin on those applications. Mrs. Banks stated that the public affairs committee along with Mrs. Bonnie Barker, representative from the DDA, will review the applications.

Mrs. Banks stated that the work continues on the review of the ordinances and art work on the city seal.

Mrs. Banks stated that the first of the dilapidated houses will be burned on Railroad Avenue and the second one within a month after that one is burned. Mrs. Banks stated that the deadline for the property owner to demolish the house on Cabiness Road expired on February 4th. Mrs. Banks offered a motion to obtain quotes to demolish the structure. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Banks stated that the director of the Monroe County Senior Center contacted her regarding a donation/contribution from the City to help with costs of the Senior Center. Mrs. Banks stated that there is a waiting list for the Meals On Wheels program that provides meals to seniors in their homes. Mrs. Banks stated that she contacted other entities and found that most make contributions to their Senior Centers. Mrs. Banks offered a motion to donate \$5,000 to the Monroe County Senior Center for 2011 and to include this contribution in future budgets. Mr. Calloway seconded the motion. Mr. Lawrence stated that he is in favor of donating money to the center but concerned that there are other nonprofit organizations that need money also. Mr. Lawrence stated that the previous administration stopped all contributions. Mr. Wilson asked how the Senior Center is funded and Mr. Lawrence stated that they receive Federal, State, and County money. Mayor Howard stated that in 2006 or 2007 council stopped all contributions due to budget restraints. Mr. Lawrence requested that if considering giving to one entity that council looks at all nonprofit entities for contributions. Mr. Lawrence stated that the City was contributing \$10,000 per year to the Senior Center before they stopped all contributions. Mrs. Banks stated that she will have more information tomorrow on the

number of meals provided and the number of seniors on the waiting list. Mr. Lawrence stated that even when the city was contributing there was a waiting list. Mr. Lawrence stated that the First Baptist Church and United Methodist Church provides Meals On Wheels also. Mayor Howard stated this may be the most important issue discussed by council this year, but as it is structured and presented, he would have to veto the matter if approved. Mr. Melton stated that the City cannot give away funds but can contract with the Senior Center to provide meals to those that otherwise would not have one. Mr. Melton stated that it must be contractual for funds for a service to be provided. Mr. Wilson asked for clarification that it would need to be specific number of meals to a specific number of city seniors and a specific length of time and Mr. Melton agreed that this would need to be the form of the contract. Mrs. Banks amended her motion that a decision will be made at the next council meeting. Mr. Hansford seconded the amended motion. Mr. Hansford stated that he appreciates Mrs. Banks bringing the matter to council. Mr. Lawrence asked that all nonprofit agencies be included in the motion and Mrs. Banks amended her motion to state that a decision would be made at the next council meeting regarding donations/contributions to all nonprofit agencies. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

MR. DODD

Mr. Dodd reviewed invoices totaling over \$500 for each vendor and offered a motion to approve the street department committee totals of \$15,225.57 and the garage department committee totals of \$1,696.75. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dodd called on Mr. Randall for an update on the Streetscape Project. Mr. Randall stated that the weather looks good for the next week and should allow JHC to complete all concrete pours for the steps. Mr. Randall stated that all electrical and sound system equipment should be in place by the festival; trees should be planted before the festival but vegetation in the bumpouts will not be planted until after the festival; DOT working on Jackson/Main Street traffic signals and should have the bases poured on Main/Lee Street intersection soon; as soon as the remainder of the conduit is in on Lee Street, the pavers will go down.

Mr. Dodd reviewed the existing ordinances regarding road cuts. Mr. Dodd stated that there are two different sections that relate to this – one is for subdivisions and the other for damage/destruction to roadways. Mr. Dodd stated that the ordinance relating to road cuts requires that the city repair the roadway and then bill the contractor for the actual cost. Mr. Dodd stated that he would like for the public affairs committee to review the amendments necessary to correct and clarify this ordinance. Mrs. Banks asked that the public works committee gather the information and present it to the public affairs committee.

CITY CLERK REPORT

Mrs. Hall was sick and unable to attend the meeting; therefore there was no City Clerk report.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

ADDITIONAL OLD BUSINESS AND NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Howard reminded everyone of the Arbor Day event on February 18th at 2:00 pm.

Mayor Howard stated that the City and DOC are working together on projects that the DOC inmates can help the City with.

Mayor Howard stated that a decision needs to be made on the Electric Cities Smart Grid evaluation. Mr. Calloway offered a motion to ask Electric Cities of Georgia to perform the evaluation on our figures for a possible Smart Grid project. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Banks asked if a decision needs to be made on the GEFA loan and Mayor Howard stated that we have a couple of weeks to make that decision.

Mr. Hansford introduced members on the 2011 Monroe Leadership Class.

Mr. Hansford asked Mr. Randall to explain the issue regarding the city websites. Mr. Randall reviewed that we currently do not have access to the Forsyth Cable Net website and the city website is updated as requested but it is not maintained. Mr. Randall recommended working with our IT company, IHS and have them upgrade and/or rewrite websites so that they can be properly maintained. Mr. Hansford stated that this will

further be discussed at the committee meeting on Friday for approval at the next council meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk