

MINUTES

FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

AUGUST 16, 2011

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND INVOCATION

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Mr. Wilson gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF MR. THOMAS WHITE

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, Thomas White; and City Clerk, Janice Hall.

Mayor Howard introduced Mr. Thomas White as the newly appointed City Administrator.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 2, 2011 COUNCIL MEETING

Mrs. Banks offered a motion to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2011 council meeting as written. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT

Mayor Howard opened the public hearing for comments for or against the Urban Redevelopment Plan Amendment. Mr. Nick Kouloungis, MGRC, reviewed the amendment and stated that this was properly advertised in the August 10, 2011 issue of the Reporter and the Urban Redevelopment Plan was adopted on June 20, 2010. Mr. Kouloungis stated that there are additional parcels in the downtown area that should be included in the Urban Redevelopment Plan. Mr. Kouloungis stated the establishment of the Opportunity Zone by council is the main economic investment. Mrs. Banks asked if there is a limit to the number of Opportunity Zones in a City and Mr. Kouloungis stated that there is not a limit but the criteria is very specific. Mrs. Banks asked what the timeframe for approval would be and Mr. Kouloungis stated approximately 3 to 4 months is average. Hearing no further comments for or against the approval of the Urban Redevelopment Plan Amendment, Mayor Howard closed the public hearing.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION FOR URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT

Mrs. Banks offered a motion to adopt the resolution to amend the Urban Redevelopment Plan as presented. Seconded by Mr. Calloway, the motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Banks thanked Mayor and Council for moving forward on this economic tool.

APPROVAL OF LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT WITH BUCKLEY & HOPKINS FOR AUDIT OF FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FOR 2010

Mrs. Hall reviewed the letter of engagement from Buckley & Hopkins stating that this audit is for the federal expenditures on grants for 2010. Mrs. Hall stated that this audit is in addition to the regular annual audit that is performed each year and is due by the end of September. Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the letter of engagement with Buckley & Hopkins for an audit of federal expenditures for 2010. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

2011 MILLAGE RATE

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to advertise the proposed millage rate at 5.6 mils the same as last year. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Hall stated that keeping the millage rate at the same as last year will reduce the amount of taxes levied because the total digest is less than it was last year. Mrs. Hall stated that she would prepare the 5-year history for advertisement.

PRESENTATION OF VETOES FROM MAYOR BY CITY CLERK

Mrs. Hall stated that copies of both veto letters from Mayor Howard are copied in council packets.

Mr. Calloway offered a motion to override the veto on the take home vehicles. Mrs. Banks seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson asked if this would mean that no vehicles would be taken home and Mr. Calloway stated that no vehicles would be taken outside the county. Mr. Melton stated that if the motion is to override the veto, it will establish the motion back to the original motion. Mr. Calloway stated that his motion is to override the Mayor's veto. The motion carried with five (5) votes for (Dodd, Banks, Calloway, Hansford, and Wilson) and one (1) abstention (Lawrence).

Mr. Calloway offered a motion to override the veto regarding appointing Alvin Randall as the department head over the electric and Steve Sikes as the department head over the meter reading department. Mrs. Banks seconded the motion. Mr. Melton asked if this is to override the veto and return to the original motion and Mr. Calloway stated that it is. Mr. Lawrence asked if correct procedures were followed. Mr. Wilson reviewed the motion as written in the minutes which stated Steve Jones appointed as department head over street and sanitation, Steve Sikes appointed as department head over meter reading, Steve Butler appointed as department head over the garage, and Alvin Randall appointed as department head over the electric department. Mr. White stated that moving Alvin Randall will leave a void and he spoke with Steve Jones as he is not comfortable doing what Alvin was doing. Mr. Calloway stated that Alvin Randall will continue with his same duties. Mr. Hansford stated that creating a department head for the meter reading department creates a new department and a way around that needs to be considered. Mrs. Banks stated that the department was created when a department head was appointed. Mr. Lawrence asked Mr. Melton if the correct procedures were being followed. Mr. Melton read from the City Charter Section 3.101 and 3.102 where it is stated that council can establish/alter/abolish nonelective offices, positions of employment, departments and agencies of the city. Mr. Dodd stated that this is generally handled at the 1st council meeting each year. Mr. Melton agreed that it is customary but not required to be handled at the 1st meeting in January. Mayor Howard read the entire veto he submitted regarding the appointment of these department heads. Mrs. Banks stated that while she appreciates the Mayor's concerns, the benefit of these appointments is the creation of accountability for areas that were not clear before. Mayor Howard stated that council had the opportunity to bring Mr. White in on this but did not. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE INVOICES

Mrs. Hall reviewed the accounts payable invoices for approval as \$159,140.34 from general operating and \$29,030.26 from SPLOST funds for a total of \$188,170.60. Mr. Hansford offered a motion to approve the accounts payable invoices. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MR. DODD

Mr. Dodd had nothing further to report from the public works committee.

MRS. BANKS

Mrs. Banks offered the following report from the public affairs committee:

- Thanked all city crews for work during the storms and their work on the lingering effects of the storm
- Thanked Mrs. Khoury for her work on putting together the concert and reported a good crowd attended the concert. The next concert is September 10th.
- Thanked property owners for work on the dilapidated houses on Powell Street and Jones Street
- Announced that the American Red Cross needs volunteers in Monroe County

MR. CALLOWAY

Mr. Calloway had nothing further to report from the public utilities committee.

MR. HANSFORD

Mr. Hansford offered the following report from the administrative and telecommunications committees:

- The telecommunications committee will meet on Monday at 10:00 am.

MR. WILSON

Mr. Wilson offered the following report from the public safety committee:

- Mr. Wilson offered a motion to advertise a public hearing for the amendments to the police ordinance for September 20, 2011. Seconded by Mr. Hansford, the motion carried unanimously.

MR. LAWRENCE

Mr. Lawrence offered the following report from the parks/recreation/cemetery committee:

- The Tree Board will meet on August 23, 2011
- Work should begin on the Kynette Park project on August 30th
- Mrs. Banks asked if the Tree Board is working on a tree replacement program and Mr. Lawrence stated that they are

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. White stated that he will have a report from all department heads on a monthly basis.

CITY CLERK REPORT

Mrs. Hall reported that training will be held tomorrow for staff on setting up the utility bill online payment system and once the training is complete customers can begin making online payments.

Mrs. Hall stated that all city employees will be required to attend customer service training at the Department of Corrections on September 27 – 29, 2011.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

MAYOR HOWARD

Mayor Howard reported that Mr. White has given responsibility to various departments for areas of town to oversee the cleanup of the areas.

Mayor Howard thanked all city workers for their work during and after the storm last week.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Mr. James Vaughn, Monroe County Commission Chairman, came before council stating that general talk about the SPLOST and Transportation SPLOST has been held between several elected officials. Mr. Vaughn stated that the vote on the Transportation SPLOST is currently scheduled for July 2012 but may actually get moved to the November 2012 ballot. Mr. Vaughn stated that the regular SPLOST needs to go before the voters before the Transportation SPLOST and this would mean a called election for February 2012. Mr. Vaughn stated that the county commissioners are working with an engineer on sources of water for Monroe County. Mr. Vaughn asked that council sit down with the commissioners and look at doing something on water together rather than two separate projects.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk