

## **MINUTES**

### **FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**AUGUST 20, 2013**

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

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Lawrence gave the invocation.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Present for the meeting was Mayor John Howard, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Jo Anna Banks, Eric Wilson, and Melvin Lawrence. Also present was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Administrator, Thomas White; and City Clerk, Janice Hall.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 6, 2013 COUNCIL MEETING**

Mrs. Banks offered a motion to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2013 as written. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Banks, Wilson, and Lawrence).

Mayor Howard called for a 5 minute recess to allow Mr. Hewitt to setup for his presentation.

#### **PRESENTATION OF JOHN HEWITT**

##### **Distributed Generation**

Mr. John Hewitt reviewed State regulations for Distributed Generation (DG). Mr. Hewitt reviewed city has one customer that has solar power and plans for wind turbine power. Mr. Hewitt recommended that the city develop and adopt a Distributed Generation Policy. Mrs. Banks offered a motion to develop a Distributed Generation Policy allowing current customer with DG power to continue as planned with solar and wind power and not to allow for any additional distributed generation power in accordance with State regulations. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Banks, Wilson, and Lawrence).

##### **Review of Electric, Water, Sewer, Cable, and Sanitation revenues and expenses**

Mr. Hewitt reviewed revenues and expenses for the electric, water, sewer, cable, and sanitation. Mr. Hewitt stated that figures so far might be a little skewed as city privatized garbage service in April and paid off the cable bond in May. Mr. Hewitt recommended watching cable revenue and expenses for a couple of months to see what happens without having the monthly bond payment. Mrs. Banks stated that other than the utility revenues, the city does not have a big pot of revenue to pull from as the property tax, LOST, etc are very small portion of the total revenues. Mr. Hewitt recommended looking

at the sanitation after the privatization as the revenues have dropped and the expenses continue the same. Mr. Hewitt recommended that each user based service should pay for itself. Mr. Hewitt also reviewed funds withdrawn from the Municipal Competitive Trust (MCT) and the necessity to repay those funds. Mr. Hewitt stated \$4.7 million has been withdrawn since 2007 and only \$1.9 million from Yearend Settlement and Off System Sales plus \$650,000 grant reimbursement have been paid back to the MCT. Mr. Hewitt stated that the MCT was pledged to pay for the Plant Vogtle expansion which will be due in 2036 and the city will need to begin depositing \$500,000 per year to have sufficient funds in the account to pay the debt. The debt service amount due in 2036 is estimated to be \$2 million per year. Mrs. Banks asked what that would equate to in a rate increase for the citizens and Mr. Hewitt stated approximately a 30% rate increase. Council reviewed possible sale of cable system or amount needed to upgrade the system. Council reviewed privatization of garbage and plan to save money in reduction of staff and vehicles. Mr. Hewitt reviewed his recommendations and observations – rate training for all departments involved in billing in anyway, billing system training for employees, establishment of a billing master, independent contractor to review water, and sewer to determine rates and if should bring service back in-house, independent contractor to review cable system for recommendation on selling system or upgrading the system, and strongly recommended rate increases with the 2014 budget. Mayor Howard stated he promised to keep the public informed of where city stands and this is the reason for tonight's presentation. Mayor Howard stated that he wants to make sure there are sufficient funds to pay the debt service in 2036. Mayor Howard stated that an enterprise city should be able to stand on its own.

Mayor Howard called for a 5 minute recess to allow time to remove the presentation equipment.

#### **ADOPT RESOLUTION FOR THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Mrs. Hall stated that council adopted a similar resolution in February; however, Department of Community Affairs required changes to the wording of the resolution. Mrs. Banks offered a motion to adopt the resolution and Mr. Lawrence seconded the motion. Mayor Howard asked for a status of the Plan and Mr. White stated this will designate areas of the city to redevelop but must be approved by DCA. Mrs. Banks stated the URP is for lighted areas and provides for more points when applying for grants with DCA. The motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Banks, Wilson, and Lawrence).

### **MAGGIE JACKSON**

Mrs. Jackson withdrew her request to be on the agenda.

### **NOTIFICATION OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR ALCOHOL PACKAGE LICENSE FOR PANSY'S, 140 POWERHOUSE ROAD – OWNER TONIA MAYS**

Mr. White stated this is notification of the public hearing on September 17<sup>th</sup> for the alcohol package license application for Pansy's at 140 Powerhouse Road.

### **APPROVAL OF SEWER LINE EASEMENT FOR HARDIN PROPERTY ON HIGHWAY 42 SOUTH**

Mr. White reviewed the easement stating that the new sewer line for the South Interceptor line runs across the Hardin property on Highway 42 South. Mr. Melton stated this easement states that the original easement will be Quit Claimed back to the owner. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the easement and Quit Claim of the original easement. Seconded by Mrs. Banks, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Banks, Wilson, and Lawrence).

### **APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE INVOICES**

Mr. Wilson reviewed invoices for each department and offered a motion to approve the accounts payable invoices totaling \$304,989.30 and Mr. Lawrence seconded the motion. Mrs. Banks stated that an email from Mrs. Hall showed \$330,000 outstanding and asked if that is still the case and Mrs. Hall stated that \$120,000 of that amount has been paid. Mrs. Banks stated that council needs to maintain a balanced budget and the property tax money coming in at the end of the year will hopefully help us break even. Mayor Howard stated big expenses from the special projects and the department heads are holding down expenses. The motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Banks, Wilson, and Lawrence).

### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Mr. White offered the following report:

- Railroad Avenue Project – no change, still waiting on Railroad to accept our proposal.
- South Interceptor Line – Mr. Melton filed the documentation in court for the final easement needed
- Travel Policy – adopted policy which requires approval for all elected officials travel and asked if anyone had any upcoming travel. Mayor Howard stated that he traveled last weekend at no cost to city.
- Mr. Dodd asked for an update on Streetscape Phase III – waiting on update from engineer. Mr. Dodd stated that he was copied on an email from Atkins regarding making Harris Street and

Kimball Street one-way streets. Mr. Dodd stated that this change would require posting for 30 days and then a public hearing. Mr. White stated that council requested a study on making these one-way streets and he is working with Atkins to get this study completed. Mr. Dodd stated that he just wanted to make sure that Atkins was not moving forward with making the streets one-way without council vote or notification to the public. Mr. Wilson stated that something needs to be done to stop parking on both sides of these streets as they are narrow and when people are parked on both sides there is barely enough room for one vehicle to drive through.

- Mrs. Banks asked for an update on LMIG – preconstruction meeting held last week with contractor
- Mrs. Banks asked for an update on the Cemetery maintenance RFP – Mr. White stated copy of the bids received has been placed in everyone’s mailbox.
- Mrs. Banks asked status of the RFP for cable system and Mr. White stated RFP will be in next week’s paper

#### **CITY CLERK REPORT**

Mrs. Hall reviewed qualifying next week for the November election.

#### **CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

Mr. Melton encouraged council to get in the budget process now to allow time for public hearings and adoption of budget before yearend.

Mr. Melton stated council approved an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Judge Pitman and Monroe County Commissions at the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. That IGA was presented to the County and they made changes and submitted an amended IGA for approval. Mr. Melton reviewed changes made by the county. Mr. Melton provided a copy of a counter-IGA that he proposes to include some of the changes the county included but returning required wording for the city and returning Judge Pitman as a party to the IGA. Mr. Melton stated that Judge Pitman has reviewed his revised IGA and is in agreement with the changes. Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the revised Intergovernmental Agreement with Monroe County Commissioners and Judge Pitman as presented by Mr. Melton. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Banks, Wilson, and Lawrence).

#### **MAYOR REPORT**

Mayor Howard had nothing further to report.

**ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

Mr. Ernest Pitts announced that he will be running for one of the unexpired terms for city council in the November election.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk