

## **MINUTES**

### **FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**APRIL 1, 2014**

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

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 6 PM, that the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Melton gave the invocation.

#### **AMEND AGENDA**

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to amend the agenda to add Approval of Resolution for Georgia Cities Week. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

#### **ROLL CALL**

Present for the meeting were Mayor John Howard, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Julius Stroud, Greg Goolsby, Jimmy Jones, Eric Wilson and Melvin Lawrence. Also present were City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Administrator, Thomas White; and City Clerk, Janice Hall.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MARCH 18, 2014 COUNCIL MEETING**

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2014 council meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried with five (5) votes for (Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, and Lawrence) and one (1) abstention (Wilson who was not present for the March 18 meeting).

#### **REQUEST TO CLOSE JACKSON STREET FROM MAIN STREET TO MORSE STREET ON MAY 3, 2014 FOR RELAY FOR LIFE "PAINT THE TOWN PURPLE" EVENT – JO ANNA BANKS AND WINIFRED BERRY**

Ms. Winifred Berry and Mrs. Jo Anna Banks, co-chairs for entertainment for this year's Relay For Life, addressed council regarding the events for Relay For Life. Ms. Berry reviewed the "Paint the Town Purple" event planned for May 3, 2014 and requested permission to close Jackson Street from Main Street to Morse Street for the events. Ms. Berry stated that purple bows will be available at various locations for \$10 each. Mrs. Banks requested that the community come out on May 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Paint the Town Purple event and also on May 16<sup>th</sup> at the MPHS track for the Relay For Life event and walk. Mrs. Banks stated that in the 15 years that Monroe County has participated in the Relay For Life events, more than \$1.5 million has been raised by Monroe County participants. Mr. Jones offered a motion to approve the street closing

as requested. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

**REQUEST TO CHANGE STREET CLOSING FOR CITY YARD SALE ON ADAMS STREET TO APRIL 12, 2014 – LORAIN KHOURY AND STACY LADSON**

Mrs. Loraine Khoury, Mainstreet Director, and Ms. Stacy Ladson, Mainstreet Assistant, addressed council regarding closing Adams Street for the City yard sale. Mrs. Khoury stated that the yard sale was rained out and has been rescheduled for April 12 and requested permission to close Adams Street from Johnston Street to Harris Street from 8 am until noon. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the street closing request. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

**APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION FOR GEORGIA CITIES WEEK**

Mrs. Khoury requested approval of the Resolution for Georgia Cities Week which will be observed April 13 – 19. Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the Resolution. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

**APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSIONALS FOR 2014 – APPOINTED FOR 3-MONTH INTERIM IN JANUARY 2014**

Mr. Wilson offered a motion to appoint the professionals as listed for 2014. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

**APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE INVOICES**

Mrs. Hall reviewed the invoices for approval by department; all invoices for approval total \$262,826.59. Mr. Wilson offered a motion to approve the accounts payable invoices. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

**City of Moultrie – emergency crews, ice storm - \$7,707.14**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the purchase order to pay the City of Moultrie for their work during the February ice storm. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried

unanimously, the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Mr. White offered the following report:

- Mrs. Hall and staff are working on completion of the 2013 reports; looks like 2013 will end on budget
- 2014 is on budget as of end of first quarter
- Presented travel request for Mayor Howard for April 4 – 6, 2014 to the Annual Spring Conference of Georgia Black Mayors. Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the travel request and Mr. Stroud seconded the motion. Mr. Goolsby pointed out that the request is on a different form than the one approved by council. Mr. Jones asked for the estimated cost as that information is not included on the form used and Mayor Howard stated the estimated cost will be \$300. Mayor Howard stated that he would provide a report after this year's conference. Mr. Jones asked if Mayor Howard is on the Board of this organization and Mayor Howard stated that he is on the Board. Mayor Howard stated that the name is not exclusive and anyone that wishes to can join. Mayor Howard stated that he receives good information at the meetings during the conference. The motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).
- Mr. Jones asked Mr. White how 2014 is on budget as we did not budget for a \$200,000 ice storm and Mr. White stated that he would provide a report to council at a later date.

### **CITY CLERK REPORT**

Mrs. Hall offered the following report:

- Reviewed that the \$200,000 for the ice storm is an estimate and that number includes salaries for all employees at overtime plus cost of all equipment that was used during the storm.
- Reviewed alcohol application received for business at corner of Jackson Street and Chambers Street, which will be advertised and come before council for a public hearing during the first council meeting in May.

### **CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Parks/Recreation/Cemetery – Mr. Dodd**

- Reviewed the committee meeting held where cemetery lot cost, permitting process for grave digging, contracting with third-party to handle the sell of cemetery lots was discussed; Mr. Dodd stated that city, county, and outside county residents are using the cemetery and priority should be given to city and county residents and those outside the county should pay a higher rate for a cemetery lot and Mr. White will research and provide recommendation to the committee regarding the cemetery lot costs; Mr. Dodd offered a motion to contract with Mr. James Freeman, Jr. and Mr. Mike King for cemetery lot sales and Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson asked how they would be paid and Mr. Dodd stated that they would receive the same 15% of sales that has historically been paid for the third party that handled the sales; Mr. Dodd reviewed the difficulty of handling the sales out of city hall and that Mr. Freeman is in the funeral home business and Mr. King is a grave digger; the motion carried unanimously (voting in the affirmative was Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Jones, Wilson, and Lawrence).

### **Public Safety – Mr. Stroud**

- Reviewed the committee meeting; equipment being ordered is washing machine for the fire department and patrol vehicle for police department; 2 officers have been hired of the 6 authorized; next committee meeting will be April 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am; Mayor Howard stated that the police department needs to be strengthened in the drug program and highway interdiction programs and need to purchase vehicles with seized funds; Mr. Stroud stated that two vehicles will be purchased this year – one with SPLOST funds and one with seized funds

### **Public Relations – Mr. Goolsby**

- The Downtown Development Authority is working on developing an Advisory Board for the DDA

### **Administrative – Mr. Jones**

- Reviewed the March 17 committee meeting where all items since he was sworn in was reviewed for status; working on getting a schematic drawing of the fiber optic system, RFP for replacement of all city computers has been sent out, RFP for security for city hall

has been sent out, Municipal Competitive Trust dollars spent from the Trust and how much still needs to be paid back, check writing procedure has been changed and is working, several new policies are being written, researching outsourcing payroll, RFP's for attorney, Information Technology Services, and pest control have been sent out and proposals received and are under review by Mr. White and he will make a recommendation back to the committee, fire proof file cabinets are being purchased, project X feasibility study, and Tractor Supply engineering invoice are items being reviewed by committee

#### **Public Works – Mr. Wilson**

- Primary focus for last committee meeting was 2014 LMIG and sidewalk replacement program; Mayor Howard stated that he would like to see money budgeted for road repairs in addition to the LMIG; Mayor Howard stated that we have great workers in the public works department and just need leadership training

#### **Public Utilities – Mr. Lawrence**

- Next committee meeting will be April 3 at 8:30 am where HD Supply will do a presentation for meter replacement program; Mayor Howard stated that the new meters will provide

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Howard reported that council held a great work session last night.

#### **ADDITIONAL BUSINESS – CITY COUNCIL**

There was no additional council business to discuss

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS – MAYOR HOWARD TO REVIEW RULES FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mayor Howard stated that each citizen coming forward to speak will have four (4) minutes to state their concerns. Mayor Howard stated that each citizen must state their name and address, the issue or concern that they have, and refrain from a question and answer period.

Mr. Albert Mays, 179 Hill Street, came forward and stated that he appreciated the work on Frontage Road but need to complete the area and resurface the remainder of the streets in that area and Mr. Lawrence stated that those streets are on the list to be resurfaced this year. Mr. Mays stated that properties in the area are being flooded and this needs to be corrected. Mr.

Wilson stated that Solomon Street is on the LMIG priority list for resurfacing this year. Mr. Mays stated that he wants an answer on the cable issue and Mayor Howard stated that the sell is in negotiations at this time. Mr. Mays stated that the culvert in Rest Haven cemetery has not been repaired and asked how long it would be before it is fixed.

Mr. Ronald Bearden, 441 Sunset Circle, came forward and requested that council make citizens aware of the true cost of projects including engineering, legal, survey, easements, right-of-way, utility cost, etcetera and not just the cost of the contractor. Mr. Bearden reviewed paperwork that he had requested on the Railroad Avenue Project which goes back to 2009 but just realized tonight that some discussions were held as early as 2005. Mr. Bearden reviewed paperwork that he had requested on the Railroad Avenue Project which goes back to 2009 but just realized tonight that some discussions were held as early as 2005. Mr. Popham had talked with the Railroad and there was to be no cost for the easement in 2009, the James Street project was supposed to save \$100,000 from estimated cost; the Railroad approved the project as long as the integrity of the road was maintained; in 2009 the James Street project was under budget but the money saved was moved to the Railroad Avenue project; in 2010, sidewalk cost of \$43,000 was paid from SPLOST; and stated just want to make sure everyone is aware of total cost of projects and how project money is moved around. Mr. Bearden's time limit expired.

Mr. James Lyons, 865 Montpelier Road, came forward and stated that he lives 4/10 mile outside the city limits; the Concerned Citizens Group requested that an outside investigator do the investigation or bring in the Attorney General to do the investigation; requested status of complaint against Mr. White and Mayor Howard stated that he had spoken with Mr. Jones and Mr. Melton requesting how to handle the complaint as policy does not address complaints against the city administrator and Mr. Melton recommended that the Mayor should handle the complaint, Mayor Howard stated that he feels full council should be involved; Mr. Lyons stated that he hopes council does the right thing and know that they are being watched; Mayor Howard stated that he will have an answer on the Kenny Walker complaint at the next meeting.

Mr. Albert Mays addressed council again and stated that he had his grandchildren at Kynette Park today and pot holes remain from the sewer line that was put in, yards are flooding, large oak tree limb extends into the park and needs to be cut; Mr. Mays asked when a pool would be built and Mr. Lawrence stated that it is being looked at and Mr. Mays responded that there is ample room behind the Armory for a pool.

Mr. James Lyons addressed council again and stated that the courtesy list needs to be cleared up and that the National Guard Armory is on the courtesy list and Mayor Howard stated that we need to stop all courtesy accounts. Mr. Lawrence thanked Mr. Lyons for bringing these matters to council and stated that all are being researched.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk