

MINUTES

FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL CALLED MEETING

OCTOBER 16, 2014

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order at 9:05AM. Present for the meeting were Mayor Howard, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Greg Goolsby, Jimmy Jones, and Melvin Lawrence. Also present were City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Clerk/Administrator, Janice Hall; and Administrative Assistant, Stacy Ladson.

Mr. Julius Stroud and Mr. Eric Wilson were unable to attend the meeting; therefore, all unanimous votes will be four (4) votes (Dodd, Goolsby, Jones, and Lawrence).

PUBLIC HEARING FOR ADOPTION OF 2014 MILLAGE RATE

Mrs. Hall stated the five-year history of the millage rate had been advertised in the Reporter for the required amount of time and reminded council the rate needed to be set today, as the bills will be generated today or tomorrow. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to set the 2014 millage rate to 2.8 and the motion was seconded by Mr. Goolsby. Mayor Howard stated he had received some public input concerning rate, noting some citizens were happy with cutting the rate, while others felt it was premature. Mr. Goolsby stated he believed if the City were to truly be an enterprise city, it should be reliant on utilities rather than property tax. Mayor Howard also reminded Council a 2015 budget had not been set. Mr. Jones stated he also believes citizens should not be charged a tax from the City on top of the many other taxes they are already charged, however does not want the City to go broke over the situation. Mr. Goolsby stated he thought it would be selfish to increase the utility rates and keep the millage rate. Council members discussed the financial situation with assistance from the City Auditor and City Financial Consultant. Mr. Dodd state he was aware of the cash flow issue, but noted the issue was elevated over a 6-7 year period due to not wanting to raise utility rates in a downturn in the economy. Mr. Goolsby stated eliminating the property tax would make Forsyth a more attractive City to live and conduct business in. Mrs. Hall reminded council the millage rate being set today would alter the 2014 budget. Council members looked at the examples provided by Mrs. Hall. Mr. Jones stated he did not want the City to become financially strapped, as this rate would affect money already spent, and suggested the rate be set to 4mils. Mr. Dodd spoke in favor his 2.8mils suggestion and the need to look at the entire utility budget rates. Mr. Lawrence stated he was in favor of 4mils that way the City could ease into the elimination of the tax. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Goolsby suggested a compromise at 3 mils, and Council agreed that easing into

the elimination may be easier. Mr. Dodd withdrew his motion. Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to set the 2014 millage rate at 3.5mils. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF INCENTIVE PACKAGE

Mr. Goolsby stated the Public Relations Committee had met a couple of time this week to develop an incentive package for a prospect looking to open a new corridor in Forsyth. Mr. Goolsby reviewed the incentive package recommended by the committee, noting this package is against the norm because the developer is taking a big risk opening up the area. The incentive package passed with three (3) votes for (Mr. Goolsby, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Lawrence) in the affirmative, and one (1) abstention (Dodd abstained stating that his wife's family owns property on the corridor) and Mayor Howard voting in the affirmative.

REVIEW OF 2013 AUDIT BY AL HOPKINS

Mr. Hopkins reviewed the 2013 audit. Council members discussed the need to hold a monthly budget meeting.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Mrs. Hall asked Council to review the charter draft, document any changes, and call a meeting with the Regional Commission to further review the draft.

Mrs. Hall asked if all had reviewed the email she sent out regarding the water service contract with the county and all stated that they had. Mrs. Hall stated that she would move forward with getting an amendment to the contract written.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:29AM.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Clerk