

MINUTES

FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 7, 2016

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, INVOCATION

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:01PM. Boy Scout Troop 101 led the pledge of allegiance. Elder Dee Hagan of Sharon Baptist Church gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present for the meeting were Mayor Wilson, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Julius Stroud, Dexter King, Chris Hewett and Melvin Lawrence. Also present were City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Manager, Janice Hall; City Clerk, Kristal Dunn. Absent from the meeting was Greg Goolsby.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 15, 2016 COUNCIL MEETING

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the minutes from the February 15th Council Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

AMERICAN LEGION HALL BUILDING

Mayor Wilson asked that this item be moved to the bottom of the agenda. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to move agenda item #2 to be moved to #4 on the agenda and allow the CVB (Convention Visitors Bureau) to be #2 on the agenda. Seconded by Mr. King, the motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

CVB (CONVENTION VISITORS BUREAU)

Mr. Ken Bowman came forward and stated that he was there to give the Mayor and Council an update on the CVB. Mr. Bowman stated that a new billboard had been approved and will be place one mile north of Exit 201. Mr. Bowman stated that it would be a 30 second spot on a rotating billboard. Mr. Bowman stated that Mrs. Khoury and other employees had attended the Historic Heartland meeting in Columbus and that Mrs. Khoury had been appointed as the President and Treasurer. Mr. Bowman stated that Ms. Standberry held a breakfast meeting with the hotels in the community. Mr. Bowman stated that they had been approved for community grants, approximately in the amount of \$11,000. Mr. Bowman also stated that the CVB had hired the company that did the Cherry Blossom Festival website to do the CVB website. Mr. Bowman stated that the CVB would like to work with the City on the Train Museum, and that the CVB would furnish some of the funds to build a building to house it. Mr. Bowman stated that Denise Collins and Don Daniel had planned a trip to Dacula and Kennesaw to visit their train museums and several people within the community, including Mrs. Hall had been invited. Mrs. Loraine Khoury came forward and stated that they had put together a notebook that held all of the advertisements. Mrs. Khoury stated that the Tourism Products Resource Team would be coming in to visit on March 16th. Mrs. Khoury stated that the State only gives grants if a Resource Team came to the City for a visit. Mr. Bowman closed with saying that the CVB stands ready to assist the Council with the Train Museum.

1st BAPTIST CHURCH RECOGNITION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Mayor Wilson read a letter from the 1st Baptist Church, who wanted to recognize and express their sincere appreciation to the Forsyth Fire Department, Chief David Herndon, Deputy Chief Davis Norris, and all those firefighters involved in assisting the burn of First Baptist Church's old youth house. The letter stated that their professional assistance and hard work helped save the church at least \$7,000 on the demolition of the old house.

LEADERSHIP MONROE PRESENTATION OF CLASS PROJECT

Rene Jenkins from Leadership Monroe came forward and presented to the Mayor and City Council the project that Leadership Monroe has taken on. Mrs. Jenkins stated that they had decided to fund and build an all-abilities playground that would not only benefit the County, but also the City. Mrs. Jenkins stated that approximately 200 children in the city limits of Forsyth are categorized as having some type of disability. Mrs. Jenkins stated that the project had been presented to the Recreation Board and the Board of Commissioners and both groups were on board. Mrs. Jenkins stated that Leadership Monroe would fund the playground with grants, fund raising, community donations and a lot of sweat equity. Mr. King asked about the time line and Mrs. Jenkins responded that the Leadership lasted a year and had to be started and if possible completed within that year. Mr. Stroud stated that he thought it was a great idea and that if the Leadership team needed any help with the build that they had his support. Commissioner Ambrose, who was at the meeting stated that he supported having a plaque to list the business or people who supported the build. Mr. Dodd asked if the Recreation Department was the right place for the playground. Mrs. Jenkins explained that with its proximity to the interstate and the amount of land possible to use, made it the right choice.

ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION

Mayor Wilson read the proclamation declaring March 11, 2016 as Arbor Day and that a tree would be planted at the golf course at 2:00PM. Mr. Dodd stated that the Tree Board would be giving out Elderberry bushes at Person's Bank and United Bank.

GEORGIA CITIES WEEK RESOLUTION

Mayor Wilson read the resolution recognizing April 17-23, 2016 as Georgia Cities Week and encouraging all citizens to support the celebration and corresponding activities. Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the resolution for Georgia Cities Week. Seconded by Mr. Dodd. Mr. Stroud asked about the cleanup day. Mayor Wilson stated that the cleanup day was scheduled for Saturday, April 16th, from 9:00AM – 12:00PM, and that he was hoping to get other organizations to join in. Mayor Wilson stated that citizens had approached him about beautification. Mayor Wilson stated that a meeting was being held Wednesday at 8:30AM to discuss a group that could help with keeping Forsyth beautiful. Mrs. Hall stated that the Boy Scouts had asked to be included in the cleanup day. The motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

SECLICKFIX PROGRAM

Mrs. Hall stated that the SECLICKFIX program was completely individualized to Cities and that it allowed anyone to report a problem that they saw in the City. Mrs. Hall stated that if someone was out walking and they saw something that needed to be reported to the City that needed fixing, they could use the application on their

phones to report it. Mrs. Hall stated that the cost is based upon 1% of the population. Mrs. Hall stated that employees could use the application to report any problems that they see that need to be fixed. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the use of the SECLICKFIX. Seconded by Mr. Hewett. Mr. Stroud stated he thought it was a great tool. Mr. King asked for the things that were being reported if there was a time line to fix them. Mrs. Hall stated that we would be able to pull reports of things that needed to be fixed so that they could be fixed. Mr. Stroud stated that it could be good to report when waste and recycling bins are not picked up. Mrs. Hall stated this would give everyone the ability to see things and that we could set a time line for things to be fixed and see how it works. Mr. Dodd asked if the cost was based on the number of people and Mrs. Hall stated yes, that it was not based on the number of times a person reported a problem. Mr. Dodd stated his concern was with 400 people signing up. Mr. Stroud stated that it would help the departments and that it seemed to be a win-win situation for the departments and citizens. Mrs. Hall stated that it would help with limbs on the line, recycling and pot holes. Mr. Hewett stated it was another tool to help the departments do their job. Mrs. Hall stated that it will let us know if the departments are doing their jobs. Mr. Lawrence stated that the Street Departments already see it every day. Mr. Stroud stated that it would keep employees off the phones. Mayor Wilson stated that we don't presently have a good tracking system. Mrs. Hall stated that it is a tool to help the departments do their jobs. The motion carried 4-1, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, Lawrence and Hewett) and one vote against (King).

AWARD BID FOR BUNN ROAD WATER INTERCONNECTION PROJECT

Mrs. Hall stated that Hofstadter & Associated recommended the project be awarded to Pyles Plumbing and Utility Contractors, Inc. for the booster pumps in the amount of \$206,342.61 and to Mid-South Builders, Inc., for the laying of the lines in the amount of \$770,867.00. Mrs. Hall stated that we would be submitting an application for a GEFA Loan to cover the cost. Mr. Hewett asked how many bids there were. Mrs. Hall stated that there were 13 total. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the award of the bid for the Bunn Road Water Interconnection Project to Pyles Plumbing and Utility Contractors, Inc. and Mid-South Builders, Inc. Seconded by Mr. Dodd. Mrs. Hall stated that in June 2013 the project had been approved in a joint meeting. Mr. Dodd asked what the purpose of the project was. Mrs. Hall stated that this connection to the county water system would allow for new industry with a large water need or for city use if our water system were to go down for any reason. Mrs. Hall stated that it would be a redundant system. Mr. Dodd stated that it was his opinion that it should only be used in case of emergency. The motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

APPROVAL OF RENEWAL OF ANNUAL CONTRACT WITH GEORGIA CORRECTIONS FOR PROBATION SERVICES

Mrs. Hall stated that this was the annual contract with Georgia Corrections for probation services. Mrs. Hall stated that the only changes were the code section changes to meet the new law (HB 310) which passed last summer and the probation fee increase of \$5.00, which had not be increased in almost 10 years. Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the renewal of the annual contract with Georgia Corrections. Seconded by Mr. Hewett. Mr. Stroud asked what the scope of their work was. Mrs. Hall stated that they monitor the people that are placed on probation by Municipal Court. Mr. Lawrence asked if they were located in Forsyth. Mrs. Hall stated yes, that they

were located on the other side of the square. The motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

APPROVAL OF STREETScape PHASE III CITY PORTION COST ESTIMATE

Mrs. Hall stated that this was the approval of the cost estimate of the Cities portion of Streetscape Phase III, which will be on East Johnston Street from North Lee Street to the Railroad. Mrs. Hall stated that the total cost was \$797,351.41 and that the GDOT funding was 600,000.00 and the estimated Cities cost was \$197,351.41. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the cost estimate for the Cities portion of Streetscape Phase III. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION TO AMEND RETIREMENT PLAN DOCUMENT FOR IN-SERVICE DISTRIBUTION FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mrs. Hall stated that this was a resolution to amend the GMEBS Retirement Plan Document to allow for in-service distribution for elected officials that meet certain criteria. Mrs. Hall stated that this would allow elected officials to draw retirement while serving as elected officials and are 62 years of age. Mrs. Hall stated that if the Council approved the Resolution it would then be sent to GMA (Georgia Municipal Association) for an amendment to the Plan Document to be written and submitted back to Council for approval. Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the Resolution. Seconded by Mr. King. The motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

APPROVAL FOR COST STUDY OF RETIREMENT PLAN DOCUMENT FOR AMENDED NORMAL RETIREMENT PARAMETERS

Mrs. Hall stated that several employees had asked about a different criteria for normal retirement of employees, especially in public safety. Mrs Hall reviewed the spreadsheet included in the council packet showing what all other cities have as the criteria for eligibility of retirement. Mrs Hall stated that GMEBS will charge \$1075 to provide a cost study to allow for a normal retirement different than what our plan currently calls for which is age 65 with 5 years service. Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the cost study. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE INVOICES - \$411,189.52

Mrs. Hall read the Accounts Payable totals for each Department and stated that the reason the total was so large, was because Utility Partners invoice was missed in January, so this was their January and March payment. Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the Accounts Payable Invoices in the amount of \$411,189.53. Seconded by Mr. Dodd. Mr. Hewett asked how the January invoice was missed and Mrs. Hall reviewed the process of receiving their invoice and stated that it could have been any one of the steps in the process that was missed. The motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

AMERICAN LEGION HALL BUILDING

Mr. Glover Stewart of the American Legion Post in Forsyth came forward and state the WTA Work Project Administration would like to give the American Legion Hall Building back to the City and help preserve it. Mr. Stroud asked if there were any historical artifacts in the building. Mr. Stewart stated not that he was aware of. Mr.

Stewart stated that the building at 350 West Main Street was dedicated in 1934. Mayor Wilson thanked Mr. Stewart for the offer and stated that it was in his opinion that the City should accept the building back. Mr. Stewart stated that the building was in need of a new roof. Mr. Hewett asked what shape the kitchen was in. Mr. Stewart stated that it was in good shape, except for the floor. Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to accept the American Legion Hall Building back. Seconded by Mr. Dodd. Mr. Stroud stated that he was saddened by the state of the building and that it needed to be maintained for the veterans and that we needed to make sure we do it with Grace, Honor and Dignity. The motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence.)

REPORTS:

CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Information was included in the packet regarding the MEAG CEO Roundtable meetings-please let us know if you would like to attend one of the meetings.
- The Ribbon Cutting for the Forsythia Festival will be tomorrow, March 8th, during Business 2 Business at Connie Ham Realty; networking from 5:30PM to 7:00PM, with the ribbon cutting at 6:00PM.
- Forsythia Festival will be this weekend, March 12th & 13th; Faith Fest is Saturday night at First Baptist Church; they are trying something new with kid's corner this year-wrist bands for \$15.00 for all day, you can still pay individually if you want to; still have opening for corn hole tournament teams – see Lindsey at Chamber for information.
- The DDA meeting has been canceled for March 8th and there will be a called meeting for March 15th at 5:30PM at Aldermen Hall.
- Utility Partners is draining Bibb Mill tank today in preparation for American Tank to do maintenance on the tank Wednesday.
- Congratulations are in order for Jannie Thombley – she received her certification last week at conference for Level 1 Code Enforcement Certification.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- There will be a clean-up day on April 16th, 9:00AM – 12:00PM.
- Wednesday at 8:30 there will be a meeting with community members to keep Forsyth beautiful.
- Will be on Magic 100, once a month to discuss the community.

AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Recreation AD HOC Committee

- Mr. Stroud stated that a meeting would be held March 28th.

Train Museum AD HOC Committee

- Still waiting on a called meeting of the Historical Society Board for Mrs. Hall to make a presentation to them regarding the Train Museum.

ADDITIONAL COUNCIL REPORTS

- Mr. Lawrence stated that the St. Luke Church appreciated the tree that was put on James Street.

- Mr. Stroud asked about the gateways to the city and about the over grown shrubs on I75. Mrs. Hall stated that these areas belonged to the State, and that we have approached the State about them cleaning up these areas and they replied that they would be glad to allow the city to do the cleanup. Mrs. Hall stated that we do not have the employees or the equipment to do it.
- Mr. Stroud asked about Budget Billing. Mrs. Hall stated that there has been a lot of interest in it but only 2 or 3 have signed up so far.
- Mayor Wilson stated that Chief Harris has been scheduling time at all the apartment complexes to have meetings with the residents.
- Mr. Hewett asked about dead limbs, trees at park near the pool.
- Mr. Dodd asked if we had nail down the policy on yard waste. Mrs. Hall asked that they bring proposals to the work session.
- Mr. King asked if Forsyth was a City of Ethics. Mayor Wilson stated that yes we were and that we reapply every four years.
- Mr. Stroud stated that we need to work on youth initiatives like the Boys & Girls Club. Mr. Hewett stated that we needed to get the youth organizations involved in City Government. Mr. Stroud stated that Marcy Sanders from the High School would be a good resource that she had great ideas about the youth and the City.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – (MAYOR WILSON TO REVIEW RULES FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Commissioner Ambrose came forward to thank the Mayor and Council for changing their meetings so that they could attend each other's meeting. Commissioner Ambrose stated that he looked forward to working together.
- Ronald Bearden – 441 Sunset Circle – Mr. Bearden asked if there was a pot hole, how long would it take to fix it, 30 days? Mr. Bearden stated that the sidewalks are terrible and nothing had been done. Mr. Bearden stated that he know that the lights on the highway had been contributed to vandalism and that if he used the new application that he feels it would be a blemish on the city, because it will not get fixed. Mayor Wilson stated that we were in the process of hiring a concrete person that will be dedicated to fixing the sidewalks. Mrs. Hall stated that we had to re-advertise for a concrete finisher and once we had a person in place we would need to have a plan to fix the sidewalks. Mr. Bearden stated he knows that will be a very costly deal. Mr. Bearden stated that he was not going to be a pain, but that he was going to be around.
- James Lyons – 865 Montpelier Road – Mr. Lyons asked how the City could bring the citizens into the 21st century if the City was not even in the 21st century. Mr. Lyons asked for a determination on allowing people to fish at the City reservoir. Mr. Melton stated that a letter concerning the Todd Creek Reservoir had been sent to Mr. Lyons attorney and that he would need to contact his attorney for the information. Mr. Lyons stated that the house is sitting on the Reservoir with no barrier. Mr. Lyons also stated that the septic tank was not where it should be.

ADJOURN

There being no additional business to discuss, Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Hewett, the motion carried unanimously, (voting in the affirmative were Dodd, Stroud, King, Hewett and Lawrence). The meeting adjourned at 7:05PM.

Submitted by:

Kristal S. Dunn

City Clerk