

**Minutes**  
**Forsyth City Council Meeting**  
**April 19, 2021**

**Call to Order**

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation and Roll Call**

Mayor Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Goolsby gave the invocation. In attendance for the meeting in person was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Greg Goolsby, and Chris Hewett. In attendance for the meeting via zoom was Councilmembers Julius Stroud, and Melvin Lawrence. Councilmember John Howard arrived at the meeting via zoom at 6:06 p.m. Also, in attendance for the meeting in person was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Manager, Janice Hall and City Clerk, Regina Ivie.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with five votes (Goolsby, Stroud, Lawrence, Dodd, and Hewett).

**Approval of the Minutes from the April 5, 2021 Council Meeting**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with five votes (Goolsby, Stroud, Lawrence, Dodd, and Hewett).

**Public Hearing to consider a conditional use application of Swint's Candies, LLC.**

Mr. Melton stated the application of Swint's Candies, LLC is for a conditional use for manufacturing/food processing activities in a Manufacturing/Industrial Zone (M-I). It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on March 31, April 7, and April 14, 2021. Planning & Zoning recommended approval at the Feb 22, 2021 meeting.

Mayor Wilson opened the floor in favor of or opposition of the conditional use application of Swint's Candies, LLC.

Ms. Pierson stated Swint's Candies will be manufacturing candy at the location with retail space. The conditional use was approved by the Planning & Zoning board, three voting for and one abstention of the four members present.

Mr. George Emami stated he's in favored of the conditional use application of Swint's Candies, LLC.

There being no further comments in favor of or opposition of the conditional use application of Swint's Candies, LLC Mayor Wilson closed the floor for the public hearing.

Councilmember John Howard arrived at the meeting at 6:06 p.m. All council members were present for the meeting at this point therefore all unanimous votes will be six votes (Goolsby, Stroud, Lawrence, Howard, Dodd, and Hewett).

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the conditional use application as presented. Seconded by Mr. Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Public Hearing to consider a rezoning and conditional use application of Westerleigh, Inc.**

Mr. Melton stated public hearing is to consider an ordinance to provide for an amendment of the zoning district and zoning map; tax parcel 054 005J located at 495 Holiday Circle. The request for rezoning is that the property be re-zoned from Multi-Family Residential (RM) to Highway Business (HB) with a conditional use approval to develop climate controlled self-storage. Planning & Zoning recommended approval at the March 22, 2021 meeting. The public hearing was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on March 31, April 7, and April 14, 2021.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing for comments in favor of or opposition of the rezoning and conditional use application of Westerleigh, Inc.

Ms. Pierson stated there will be no changes to the exterior of the building. She further explained the zoning in the areas north, south and the east side of the parcel are currently zoned Multi-Family Residential (RM). The Planning & Zoning board approved the request unanimously.

Mr. George Emami at 106 Chase Lane Forsyth stated any changes will be improvements to the interior of the building. Heating and Air will be throughout the entirety of the building with twenty-four access to storage units. The impact to the community will be minimal. He doesn't expect any issues with traffic.

There being no further comments for or against the rezoning and conditional use application of Westerleigh, Inc. Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing. Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the request. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of application for a license for the sale of alcoholic beverage of Dipak Patel at 291 North Lee Street.**

Mr. Melton stated the application is for the sale of alcoholic beverages (retail package liquor; beer/malt beverages-package and wine-package; tax parcel F25 015 at 291 North Lee Street. It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on April 7, and April 14, 2021.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the application as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Schneider Electric Presentation**

Trent Egbert and Jennifer Miller with Schneider Electric reviewed the potential opportunities for Schneider Electric to assist the City in increasing revenue while decreasing losses in utility meter changeout, telecom connections for departments, signature solar projects, street lighting updates, and promotional ideas. The next step in their process is for the City to approve the Investment Grade Audit Agreement. Schneider Electric will then compile projects with costs and potential funding sources. Once the Investment Grade Audit Agreement is signed, should the city decide not to move forward with a project, the cost to Schneider Electric would be \$42,350.

**Approval of legal services agreements for water and wastewater relating to USDA loan.**

Ms. Hall stated USDA requires agreements for Bobby Melton's legal services; not to exceed for \$60,000 for water and \$60,000 for wastewater. The City will be reimbursed for expenses incurred up to the time the loan is closed; approximately 18 to 24 months.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the legal services agreements as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Pellicano change order #7**

Ms. Hall reviewed the change order for the added reception desk in the lobby area of City Hall; total cost is \$14,462.80.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the change order request as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of street closure request of Sandra Buckner on Saturday, May 8, 2021.**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the street closure request as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of requisitions over \$5000**

**Radarsign \$7,210.00**

**Hydrocal, LLC \$14,258.00**

**Davis Plumbing \$16,185.00**

**Georgia Hydrant Services, Inc \$7,500.00**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve all requisitions as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**City Manager's Report**

Ms. Hall provided the following report:

City Project Updates

- Blount Street CDBG waterline – meeting with contractor to emphasize City's displeasure in the project thus far; road cuts are being left open with little to no crusher run and project is way behind schedule. Contractor assured us that he would have all lines installed, service lines installed, and meters in place by end of May. Letter sent out to residents in the area giving them an update and information relating to service line installations. Since meeting, contractor has made some improvements to the road cuts and tap to line on opposite side of MLK has been completed.
- West Main Street waterline – nearing completion of line install; most if not all customers should be on the new waterline service by now. The contractor could not do the tap at the library, so Davis Plumbing was called in to do that tap.
- Golf Course relocation of overhead line – electric crew should have finished the trenching for the underground for the new line last week; will remove old line and poles once underground is energized. Once all complete, will have area surveyed to move forward with change of easement area for access to future subdivision across creek.
- LWCF Grant work has been completed. Golf Club is pleased with the work performed. Once we receive reimbursement from DNR, we will invoice the Golf Club for the amount not reimbursed by the grant.
- Meadow Drive/Country Club Drive area reconductor project – still working to get this scheduled; this underground/reconductor should reduce outages in that area cause by trees/limbs hitting the lines.
- Landfill inspection – EPD conducted regular inspection of Old Brent Road Landfill, only a few issues were found during inspection and Steve Jones and GEC are working to get those corrected and a report back to EPD within required timeframe.
- Railroad Avenue – installation of waterline removed during Railroad Avenue upgrade; working to get cost to install 12" waterline and hydrants. Hofstadter recommends installing a 12" line with City covering the additional cost for materials for the increase line size; I recommend we cover half of the material cost for the 6" line the customer needs plus cost to run beyond their property and set another fire hydrant.
- Valero – plan was for them to tie water into hydrant located between Valero and Circle K on city easement but when they dug up the area around the hydrant, we discovered issues with the line and hydrant.
- Country Club Park LWCF Grant – Regional Commission working to finalize the application for the LWCF grant submission.

- PlanFirst application is in process for submission in May.
- Annexation Phase 1 – working with Regional Commission to finalize properties within the proposed annexation area for Phase 1 and to obtain owner and voters listing for each property. Once that listing is finalized, letters will be mailed out to each. To move forward, we must have approval from 60% of all property owners and 60% of all registered voters in the proposed area.
- City Hall – progress continues to be made; will schedule walk through for council next week (week of April 26-30) can do after 5:00 or on Saturday whichever is best for everyone; Pellicano will return to May 3 meeting for a progress update.

Development Project Updates:

- Starbucks - waiting on them to close on property.
- State Farm/American Craftsman- starting to work on site.
- QuikTrip- has all their permitting; site work should begin soon.
- Juliette Crossing Phase 2- plans are in review.
- Big Peach Car Wash- still under construction
- Manor at Montpelier Phase 2- building homes and Phase 2-B looks like it should be almost completed.
- Valero- still under construction.
- Town Creek Center - still under construction; still deciding if will do a sign; working on filling the spaces.
- Swint's Candy- Public Hearing tonight for Conditional Use, if approved will go to Design and Review on April 26.
- Barber Shop on MLK will be going before P&Z for conditional use on April 26.
- Thornton Rd subdivision will be going before P&Z for rezone from R1 to R3 along with a rezone from R1 to NS on April 26
- Harbin Repairs project is delayed.

General report:

- Auditors are working on 2020 Comprehensive Audit; governor extended deadline for all audits by 90 days, due by September 30.
- Sidewalk crew is working on sidewalk at S Lee and Plum which ended up requiring the removal of the stairs in the sidewalk to be ADA compliant.
- Installing temporary railing along sidewalk on W Johnston until fall so that stairs and sidewalk are not under demolition/construction during busy summertime for businesses.
- We must look at replacing most of our pickup trucks; working with department heads to determine which vehicles need to be replaced and what those should be replaced with.
- Mini excavator was hit by contractor on a job site; they were not aware that they hit it but once notified are willing to cover cost of repair unfortunately Mike is having a hard time finding a company that can do the needed repairs.
- Safety Grant is available through Georgia Municipal Association for cities with workers comp and/or liability coverage with them. We are submitting grant to outfit public works, fleet maintenance, and electric employees with the Hi-Vis flame retardant (for those that need it) jackets and Hi-Vis T-shirts with city logos. Approximately \$6,000 grant.
- Continue with same issues with equipment at Splashpad but it is certainly being used and enjoyed by children and adults.
- Chamber has requested to use Aldermen Hall again this year as in years past as Hospitality Suite for Forsythia Festival. The Chamber has also offered our employees that work the festival use of their office space as a place to get in out of the heat and eat. We will not have the fire or police booths that we have had in the past.
- To replace sidewalk on Indian Springs Drive, we will need to get a contractor to remove the 4 large trees between the street and sidewalk. Working with the Tree Board to recommend type tree to replant in the area that will be non-invasive and low growing.
- Waste Management is having huge issue with personnel; they cannot find people to work even with the large sign-on bonuses they are offering. They are having to pull employees from areas to cover others and recycling is the area that is being considered as least important as they are trying to cover all the garbage pickups that they can.
- Some guidelines were released last week for cities with population greater than 50,000 stating that they must have a DUNS and SAM account to receive the American Recovery Plan Funding; we already have both of those accounts in place if that it is also a requirement for smaller cities. Other than that, no guidelines have been released as to specifically how ARP funds can be used. It is still anticipated that half of the funds will be released by mid-May and the other half one year later. Funds must be expended by end of 2024.
- T-SPLOST will be on the November 2021 ballot. City must decide if we want to participate as we have previously. If we do not participate and referendum is passed, tax would still be collected in the City, but we would not receive any of the proceeds as it would all go to the County at less than 1¢ tax. We previously stated that T-SPLOST proceeds would be used to connect the sidewalks on West Main to West Johnston Street, and install sidewalks from West Johnston Street on Country Club Drive out to the park.
- The Downtown Development Authority is working with Brian and Christie Lambert to sell them the old City Hall building. The DDA should reimburse the City from the sale proceeds for the loan to remodel the exterior of the building. Those funds will go back into the MCT. We will work to clean out the remainder of the items that are still in the basement by the end of May.
- Citizen contacted me again regarding previous request for senior citizens to not have to pay a penalty on their utility bill if they receive their Social Security after the due date. Reported at last meeting regarding survey to 10 other cities of similar size and only 1 provided a Senior Citizen Discount as we do and 3 others provided a penalty waiver if account holder is over a certain age and on fixed Social Security and/or retirement. Recommend not making any changes until rate schedule is complete so that all changes can be made at one time.
- Received hard copies of plat for new burial plots in Monroe Memorial Hills Cemetery. Markers were received last week and should be installed soon.
- Food Truck Frenzy is Saturday, April 24th from 11-3 in the parking lot of Fine Arts building. Forsythia Festival is May 22 and 23.

Public Hearings and P&Z matters:

- Advertisement for changes to Alcohol Code will begin and those changes will come before council for a public hearing.
- May 3 public hearing for annexation request for 591.4 acres for FJH and Timber Assets
- Swint's Candy building design will go before Design & Review April 26
- Dentavious Traylor request for conditional use will go before P&Z April 26
- Castlevew Development Partners rezoning request will go before P&Z April 26

**City Attorney Report**

Mr. Melton reviewed the need for changes to the alcohol code; advertisement will begin and changes will come before council for a public hearing.

**Mayor's Report**

Mayor Wilson had no further business to report.

**Additional Business**

No additional business was brought forward.

**Public Comments**

No one came forward for public comments.

**Executive Session**

No executive session was held.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to discuss Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.