

**Minutes  
Forsyth City Council Meeting  
August 1, 2022.**

**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. Hewett gave the invocation. In attendance for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers John Howard, Chris Hewett, Greg Goolsby, Julius Stroud, and Mike Dodd. Also in attendance was City Manager, Janice Hall; City Attorney, Bobby Melton; and City Clerk, Regina Ivie. Mr. Lawrence did not attend the council meeting. Five members of council were in attendance therefore all unanimous votes will be five votes (Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Hewett, and Howard).

**Approval of the Agenda**

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

**Approval of the Minutes from the council meeting on July 12,2022**

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

**Employee introduction – Rebecca Headley**

Cody Ellis, Economic Development Director introduced Mrs. Rebecca Headley as the city's new Main Street Coordinator.

**Public hearing to consider an application of Tammie Herring regarding a zoning variance request for Popeye's Restaurant.**

Mr. Melton reviewed the variance request for a 60-foot pylon sign for Popeye's Restaurant; tax parcel F25 00K with a location address of 150 N. Lee Street. Planning and Zoning recommended approval at the May 23, 2022, meeting. The public hearing notice was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on July 13, 20, and 27, 2022.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing in favor of or opposition to the proposed variance request. There being no comments in favor of or opposition to the proposed variance request Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the variance request as presented. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

**Public hearing to consider an application for Stagemaster, Inc and USC Timber Holdings, LLC regarding a conditional use request.**

Mr. Melton reviewed the conditional use request for Stagemaster, Inc. The applicant seeks conditional use zoning variance in a highway business district for a proposed storage facility on several parcels; F14 036, F14 037, F14 033, F14 034, and F25 0148; a total of 15.14 acres located on North Lee Street. The zoning will remain unchanged. Planning and Zoning recommended approval at the May 23, 2022, meeting. The public hearing notice was advertised in the Monroe County Reporter on July 13, 20, and 27, 2022.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing in favor of or opposition to the proposed condition use request.

Mr. Don Carter spoke in favor of the proposed conditional use request; and reviewed the plans for the property.

There being no further comments in favor of or opposition to Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing. Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the conditional use request as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Public hearing to consider an ordinance on the application of Matt Gilbert and Three Oaks Construction regarding a zoning variance request for tax parcel 54 022A**

Mr. Melton reviewed the zoning variance request for property located at 644 Montpelier Road; tax parcel 054 022A. Planning and zoning recommended denial at the June 2022 meeting. The public hearing notice was advertised in the Monroe County Reporter on July 13, 20, and 27, 2022.

Mr. Ellis stated the variance being requested is for lot size only; the zoning will continue to be R1.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing in favor of or opposition to the zoning variance request.

Mr. Gilbert spoke in favor of the proposed zoning variance request. He stated lots are now wider, 100 foot minimum required for R1 zoning. The current site plan meets the standards for R1 zoning except minimum lot width. The current plan will be 41 lots on a 35-acre tract, 1.2 lots per acre.

After some discussion Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the zoning variance request with a minimum lot size variance of 20,000 square feet. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with four votes (Goolsby, Stroud, Howard, and Dodd). Mr. Hewett voted against the motion.

#### **Approval of a street closure request for the Mary Person High School Homecoming Parade on Sept. 22, 2022.**

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

#### **Walter Goodson to request a bias crime report against Chief Harris.**

Mr. Goodson requested a bias crime report from Mayor Wilson relating to incident with Chief Harris.

#### **Plant Vogtle Partial Sales Option**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to not support exercising the tender option by SPV J and to not support exercising the tender option by SPV P. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with four votes (Stroud, Dodd, Goolsby, and Hewett). Mr. Howard abstained.

#### **Approval of work detail agreement with Georgia Department of Corrections.**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the work detail agreement with Georgia Department of Corrections as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Approval of Requisitions Greater than \$6,000**

##### **Core & Main \$73,100**

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

#### **City Manager's Report**

Ms. Hall provided the following report:

- Grapple truck is in the shop; parts have been received and the goal is to have it back on the road no later than Wednesday next week; the crews were trying to keep debris picked up with tractor and dump truck but have not been able to make a dent in the debris that citizens have put out
- Bush hog was down; part was finally received late yesterday; Steve and Billy put the part on, and mower is back at the landfill.
- One pump at Benson Ham Lift Station is down; replacement part would not fit, having to fabricate the piece but should have that back up next week; the other pump is working fine
- Filter 6 had bad part installed; removed bad part and ordered replacement, will be end of next week before part is received and installed; filter 5 is working well
- Billy Johnson started work in the maintenance shop couple weeks back and Drew Patten started today as Facilities Maintenance person. Both positions have been vacant for a while and hopefully with these hires we can get back on track in these two departments. CVB has hired fulltime assistant; she has been working with CVB through a temp agency and as of today is now a fulltime employee. We will get these new hires to a meeting for introductions as soon as possible.
- Community Work Plan meeting with Regional Commission is tomorrow morning at City Hall beginning at 10:00 am. This will be the meeting where we review the information received during the public meetings to determine how to/if to include in the 5-year plan. Some of the department heads will attend as their schedules permit.
- Final payment and closeout paperwork has been completed for the Vibrant Art Grant for the Unity Sculpture. We anticipate receiving the \$5,000 grant funds soon as the Vibrant Art Grant is a reimbursable grant paid after the closeout of the project.
- We can apply for this year's Vibrant Art Grant in partnership with the CVB. I asked Gilda about submitting the application to replace the Welcome signs. Not sure about replacing the ones outside the city, that may be something that the CVB has to do without City funding, but at least this could replace the ones on the corridors for Forsyth. The signs were erected over 8 years ago by the Chamber using hotel tax funds, so these fall under the CVB now. Gilda is working on the narrative for the application and will get that to us for review as soon as possible. This would be done similarly to the other art grants that we have complete, in that an RFP will go out for design and then construction of the signs, of course only if grant is awarded. If grant is not awarded, we need to look at partnerships to get these signs replaced.
- Court held their first sessions in Aldermen Hall. There are a few issues that will need to be addressed but overall, everything went well. With court being held in Aldermen Hall, the CVB Board will hold their meetings at City Hall.
- Millage rate 5-year history is being advertised and will come before Council on August 15 for final adoption. 2.5 mils is the proposed rate being advertised.
- We applied for and received the Safety Grant award again this year. This is the grant through GMA Workers Comp program. We requested and were awarded \$8,800 for safety equipment for various departments. Thank you to Nancy Patten for heading up the safety committee and working to submit this application each year.
- Last council meeting, I reported the need to create a bicentennial committee. The CVB approved for Gilda to serve on this committee. Just a reminder of the need for this committee.
- Greg Head with Head Heating & Air called to let us know that he will be replacing an A/C unit on top of a building this Friday that will require a crane. They will have the block of E Johnston between Lee and Kimball closed beginning at 8:00 am and reopened no later than 10:00 am this Friday 8/5. He is responsible for contacting the affected businesses and said he would have that done before Friday. Public Safety has been notified.
- GDOT letter regarding railroad crossing work on Lee Street and Tift College Drive was forwarded out to everyone. No start date was submitted with the letter, just requested any information we could provide for project area resources or conditions, site specific conditions, and liaisons with neighborhoods in the surrounding area.
- LOST renegotiation delegation meeting has been scheduled for August 12 at 10:00 am in the upstairs conference room here at City Hall.

- Just as a reminder, the first meeting in September falls on Labor Day and council approved moving that meeting to Tuesday, September 6.

#### Blighted Properties

- 209 Sharp Street – James Green has recently purchased the property and Mr. Melton has mailed a letter to him asking his immediate plans for the property.
- 199 and 210 Freeman Ave – similar letter sent to registered agents for owner that purchased properties in 2020.

#### City Attorney Report

Mr. Melton had no further business to report.

#### Mayor's Report

Mayor Wilson reviewed an interesting statistic he learned at the MEAG conference. The city's power is 88% emission free; the national average in 2020 37.7%, the state average was 34.3%. MEAG is 66%.

#### Council Board Reports

No reports were stated.

#### Additional Business

No additional business was reported.

#### Public Comments

No one came forward for public comments.

#### Executive Session

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel issues at 6:46 p.m.; to exclude city manager, and city clerk. Seconded by Mr. Howard; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to adjourn the executive session at 7:24 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

#### Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the council meeting. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.