

**Minutes**  
**Forsyth City Council Meeting**  
**August 15, 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 Mike Dodd, Julius Stroud, Greg Goolsby, Melvin Lawrence, Chris Hewett, and John Howard. Also in attendance was City Manager, Janice Hall; City Attorney, Bobby Melton; and City Clerk, Regina Ivie. All members of council were in attendance therefore all unanimous votes will be six votes (Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Lawrence, Hewett, and Howard).

**Approval of the Agenda**

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

**Approval of the Minutes for the called meeting and council meeting held on August 1, 2022.**

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the minutes for both meetings as presented. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

**Public hearing to set 2022 millage rate.**

Ms. Hall stated the five-year history as well as the proposed 2.5 mils has been advertised for a public hearing. The rate can be adopted at 2.5 mils or lower.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing regarding the proposed millage rate. There being no comments from the public Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adopt a 2.5 millage rate. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence. After some discussion regarding the millage rate Mayor Wilson called for a vote. The motion carried with five votes (Howard, Hewett, Lawrence, Goolsby, and Dodd). Mr. Stroud voted against the motion.

**Convention & Visitors Bureau quarterly report – Gilda Stanbery**

Ms. Stanbery reviewed recent marketing tools in production to promote the City's events, restaurants, and shopping available. Forsyth is being presented as a hub with numerous outdoor activities in an upcoming video to feature the community.

**Pellicano – Michael Garrison**

Mr. Michael Garrison was not in attendance for the meeting. Ms. Hall recommended the agenda item be tabled till the next council meeting, September 6, 2022.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to table the agenda item until September 6, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Blighted Properties**

Ms. Hall stated there are several properties in need of review with council to possibly remove from the blighted property list.

• **218 Brooklyn Ave – Otis Ingram**

Mr. Otis Ingram reviewed the concept for the property, a senior independent living community. Previously Mr. Ingram wanted to build all 60 units at one time. Currently after some reevaluation, he wants to build the club house and twenty units. He's hoping to have all twenty units pre-leased during construction then proceed to the next twenty units.

In closing Mr. Ingram requested an extension to allow sufficient time to obtain a new bid for construction, to secure financing, and to begin construction by February 1, 2023.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to grant the extension till Feb 1, 2023, for construction to resume. Seconded by Mr. Dodd. After some discussion Mayor Wilson called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried with five votes (Goolsby, Dodd, Lawrence, Stroud, and Hewett). Mr. Howard voted against the motion.

- **460 Willis Wilder Drive**

Ms. Hall stated she spoke with the property owner on two occasions. The yard has been maintained, and there are no broken windows. At this time the property is no longer blighted. Ms. Hall recommended the property be removed from the blighted property list.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to remove the property from the blighted property list. Seconded by Mr. Howard; the motion carried unanimously.

- **390 Sunset Circle**

Ms. Hall stated the owner of the property hasn't lived at the property for some time. The yard was to be maintained by someone hired to do so. The house is not blighted. The appraisal for the property is 77k. The vehicle has a cover on it with current tag, and insurance. The yard needs to be cleaned only. Ms. Hall recommended the property be suspended at this time for 30 days to allow time for the yard to be maintained.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to suspend 390 Sunset Circle for 30 days on the blighted properties list. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

- **19 Culloden Road**

Ms. Hall stated Mr. Ingram is the owner of the property. Previously we had received several complaints about the overgrowth and the structure on the property. At this time the overgrowth has been removed around the structure, the house has been painted, the front porch has been replaced by Mr. Ingram. The property has been brought up to livable conditions. Ms. Hall recommended 19 Culloden Road be removed from the blighted property list.

Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to remove 19 Culloden Road from the blighted property list. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

- **209 Sharp Street**

Ms. Hall stated the property was recently purchased by James Green. He plans to demolish the structure on the property. Ms. Hall recommended we suspend 209 Sharp Street from the blighted property list.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to suspend 209 Sharp Street from the blighted property list. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

- **34 Blount Street**

Ms. Hall stated the address should be 116 Blount Street. The address has been corrected with the tax assessor's office. The main issue with the property is the condition of the yard. Ms. Evans is working to resolve the condition of the yard. Ms. Hall recommended we suspend the property from the blighted property list.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to suspend the property from the blighted property list. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval to surplus city equipment.**

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve to surplus the city equipment presented to be sold on Govdeals. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of a budget adjustment for the safety grant line items.**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the budget adjustment for the safety grant line items as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of a proposal by Schnabel Engineering for dredging activities at Tobesofkee Creek Reservoir.**

Ms. Hall stated Hofstadter & Associates will perform the engineering for the dredging. The proposal is for 18 test sites to determine where to store the material to be removed from the reservoir. Invoice will come from Hofstadter & Associates; cost will not exceed \$15,000. The cost of the project will be reimbursed by the USDA loan.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the services by Schnabel Engineering as presented; to be invoiced by Hofstadter & Associates. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously

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

**Altec Industries \$27,930.46**

**Core & Main \$74,240.00**

**Core & Main \$88,260.00**

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

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

Ms. Hall provided the following report:

- Update from Craig Helms on Manganese levels.  
With all the flushing that H2O had to do last week along with the customers, our water tanks did get low on Friday about the time the electricity went out due to a tree on the line. Power was restored after about 2 hours, then able to restart processing water. We do not provide water adjustments unless we can determine that the increased water usage was city responsibility. We received several comments from customers, rightfully so, that we are telling them to run all the faucets in their homes to clear the lines and that will increase their water bill. I would like permission to adjust water and sewer for those that see a significant increase in their water usage for the bill covering this period. Considering credit for first 2,000 gallons of water & sewer charges but need to determine if that is fair across all customers as some may see higher usage than others. Requesting permission to either adjust on case-by-case basis which would require each customer to contact City Hall or provide a credit towards water & sewer for the bill that covers this period.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve an across-the-board adjustment. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence. Ms. Hall asked for clarification regarding the motion. Mr. Stroud amended his motion to approve adjustments that is most beneficial to the customer. Mr. Lawrence seconded the amended motion; the motion carried unanimously.

- Craig Helms, Hofstadter & Associates, and I had meeting last week with EPD regarding the copper violations in our discharge water. EPD has requested regular updates on the plant upgrade projects and how the discharge will be handled. Reminder that Hofstadter & Associates assisted us in applying for ARPA funding to help defray the cost of moving the discharge lines. EPD may submit a Consent Order for the violations in the discharge water, so they have a paper trail for their files.
- Part for Grapple truck was received and installed only to be determined that the part was bad. It has been removed and replacement should be in and installed tomorrow.
- Reminder of need to create a bicentennial committee.
- Reminder that first council meeting in September will be on Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> due to Labor Day holiday
- Last day for splashpad will be Labor Day. Splashpad will be closed and winterized for the season.
- Craig Helms, Mike Batchelor, and I had a follow-up meeting with GDOT last week regarding utility relocations for the CVL Project. I will bring the MOU with GDOT to the next meeting for your approval.
- Police department State Certification status. Sent out information received from GACP regarding our State Certification. Major Daniels and I have spoken to those that know what is required to pass an onsite visit for the certification, and all have said that they agree we should withdraw from the program and reapply after 12 months.
- Request approval to pay police department employees for unused vacation time due to being short-staffed. This will not be a requirement, but for those that would prefer to be paid vacation rather than take the time off.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the payout of unused vacation hours of police department employees. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

- Braves Championship Trophy tour is this Wednesday, here in front of City Hall from 4-7. Everyone is invited to come out and take pictures with the trophy. We would like to close Kimball Street from Main to Chambers in case it is needed to park their Braves Bronco and for additional pedestrian safety. Parking will be available in city hall parking lot and the public safety parking lot behind city hall. There will be concessions available for purchase along with raffles for some Braves items.

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

- Date for Community Yard Sale has been moved to October 1. Previously requested street closures for September 3, need permission to change that street closure approval.
- Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the street closure change request to October 1, 2022, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.
- Retiree Bobby Mays passed away last week, and we send our prayers and condolences to his family

### **City Attorney Report**

Mr. Melton stated the court date for 503 Stroud Street, a blighted property in the city is September 15<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. The owner of the property is being served by publication in the newspaper.

Mr. Melton further stated a draft ordinance pertaining to blighted property was sent to council for review and comments. The ordinance is based upon Macon-Bibb's. The ordinance provides an incentive to property owners to keep up their property by imposing inflated taxes on the property. The ordinance will be man-power sensitive, someone will need to work the process, and to establish what projects/places are subject to the inflated taxes. Coordination with tax officials will be necessary.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Wilson had no further business to report.

### **Council Board Reports**

Mr. Stroud stated he and Ms. Betsy Fitzgerald with Big Brothers & Big Sisters are in communication regarding the needs of children of Monroe County. They are working together with Dr. Hickman to arrange meetings to further discuss those needs.

Mr. Hewett stated a housing authority meeting will be held on September 13, 2022.

### **Additional Business**

Mr. Stroud requested the housing authority research avenues available to assist elderly residents with minor repairs.

Mr. Stroud discussed hours of the parks, pavilions, and walking trails. Mr. Stroud offered a motion for all walking trails, and all pavilions accessible 24 hours a day. Seconded by Mr. Howard; the motion carried unanimously.

### **Public Comments**

Mr. Tony Evans at 200 Sharp Street reviewed recent incidents at his home regarding soil & erosion.

### **Executive Session**

No executive session was held.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.