

**Minutes  
Forsyth City Council Meeting  
September 20, 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. Lawrence gave the invocation. In attendance for the meeting in person was Mayor Eric Wilson; Councilmembers Julius Stroud, Greg Goolsby, Chris Hewett, Mike Dodd, John Howard, and Melvin Lawrence. Also in attendance for the meeting 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 (Goolsby, Howard, Stroud, Lawrence, Dodd, and Hewett).

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to add an item on the agenda after the approval of the minutes; item 4a. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the minutes from the council meeting on September 7, 2021**

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

**Naming of north plaza at new City Hall.**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to name the north plaza of the new City Hall the George “Dexter” King Plaza with a plaque to prepared. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Gilda Stanbery – Bicentennial Presentation**

Mr. Ralph Bass expressed his appreciation for the support of the bicentennial celebration and reviewed the events planned for the celebration.

**Swearing in of Yvonne Stroud to Housing Authority Board**

Mrs. Stroud was sworn in by Mayor Wilson to the Housing Authority Board.

**Public Hearing to consider an application of Eric Larsen of Commercial Signs, Inc regarding Starbucks at 318 Russell Parkway**

Mr. Melton stated the application of Eric Larsen of Commercial Signs, Inc. regarding Starbucks is a zoning variance request that would allow a height variation for a sign, and a variance of distance limitation from other signs; tax parcel F25 012 The current zoning of the property is Highway Business (HB) and will remain unchanged. The notice for the public hearing was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on September 1, 8, and 15, 2021.

Mayor Wilson opened the floor in favor of or opposition of the proposed zoning variance request.

Mr. George Emami stated he’s in favor of the zoning variance request.

Ms. Hall stated Starbucks is requesting a 75-foot pole sign. City ordinance allows for a 60-foot pole sign at the interstate; and any billboard sign at the interstate must be more than 660 feet away from another sign. Currently Starbucks is less than 200 feet away from the billboard sign at Days Inn. Planning and Zoning approved the request at their last meeting.

Ms. Stacey Buckley stated that Starbucks is very excited to be in Forsyth. Currently, they feel the sign placement is necessary to help increase their customer and traffic base off the interstate due to the limited access and visibility of the site. Ms. Buckley further stated she’s in favor of the zoning variance request.

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

**2020 Audit presentation by Miller Edwards of Mauldin & Jenkins**

Mr. Miller Edwards provided a review of the City's 2020 financial statements for the entity including CVB and DDA: assets of \$45,316,293 and liabilities of \$14,781,817 with a net position of \$30,534,476. The assets of the general fund were at \$3,122,030, liabilities at \$370,609 with a fund balance of \$2,751,421; a good place to be with approximately 145 days of expenses covered. Mr. Edwards further stated the expenses of public safety is the City's largest expenditure of the general fund; approximately 45%. The two SPLOST funds and the Capital Projects fund assets at 12/31/2020 are \$5,306,988 and liabilities of \$1,092,932 with a fund balance of \$4,214,056. The combined utilities fund had a net position of \$23,281,540 of which assets were \$25,760,658 less liabilities of \$2,479,118; revenues were just over \$15 million with expenses just below \$11 million. In closing Mr. Edwards stated there were no findings this year and all were resolved for last year; overall the city is in great shape with a good clean audit for 2020.

**Approval of resolution closing Pippin Lane – tabled at the September 7, 2021, Council meeting.**

Mr. Melton stated the resolution is being presented for additional consideration. The property that is Pippin Lane is owned on all sides except for the city street on the north by the same owner.

Mr. Hewett stated the Housing Authority recommends the closure of Pippin Lane.

Mr. Melton further stated that previously there were concerns about the tenants living on property.

Mr. Emami stated he wants to assist the tenants with placement into new homes; with up to \$2000 per tenant in the form of a rebate, a moving allowance or deposit assistance if the planned housing project is approved. Mr. Emami further stated the funds could be placed with the City, or the Housing Authority, or directly to those three tenants. He also stated the current tenants would have first right of refusal for the new properties built and offered his services to assist with obtaining a new residence.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to close Pippin Lane. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of service plan agreements with Bizzy Bee Exterminators, Inc.**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the service plan agreements with Bizzy Bee Exterminators, Inc. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of requisitions greater than \$5,000**

**Stuart C. Irby Co. \$20,362.50**

**Davis Plumbing \$11,520.00**

**Ace Pole Company Inc \$5,844.00**

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

**City Manager's Report**

Ms. Hall provided the following report:

- 911 Memorial Event last Saturday was great. A huge thank you to the fire department for all their work in putting that event together and all those that participated to make this a memorable event.
- Norvin Place and Railroad Avenue water projects were scheduled for today but may get postponed due to weather.
- Sidewalk project on Indian Springs Drive has been completed. The Williams provided some recommendations for trees to put back in the area. I will review those with the Tree Board to determine the best species to plant in that area.
- Next sidewalk project will be the removal of the stairs at Lee/Plum.
- Several commercial project still in various stages of completion and couple of new business prospects are being worked on.
- City Hall project – We have spent most of our time over the last month getting items moved into and arranged in the building. Everyone from the Welcome Center is moved into the new building; we do not have phones yet but

hope to have that issue resolved this week, once that is resolved we can start working toward moving the remainder of the employees in – several technology issues need to be resolved before we can accomplish that, and AT&T requires 2 weeks’ notice to move lines. Clark Nexsen has not deemed the project substantially complete. We did a thorough walkthrough on Friday and Clark Nexsen is compiling a list of items to be completed before they will deem them substantially complete. Open House/Dedication for new City Hall is this Saturday at 2:00 and we hope everyone can attend. Due to COVID, we will not provide refreshments but will have gift bags to hand out.

**City Attorney Report**

Mr. Melton had no further business to report.

**Mayor’s Report**

Mayor Wilson had no further business to report.

**Additional Business**

Mr. Stroud introduced Shala and Calandra Barron of S&C Party Your Way, a new business in the City.

Mr. Dodd expressed his appreciation for the care and concern he received after his wife’s passing.

**Public Comments**

No one came forward for public comments.

**Executive Session**

No executive session was held.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 7:11p.m.