

**Minutes
Forsyth City Council Meeting
October 19, 2020**

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. Present for the meeting in person was Mayor Eric Wilson; Councilmembers Greg Goolsby, Mike Dodd, Chris Hewett, and Melvin Lawrence. Councilmember John Howard was present for the meeting via zoom. Also present for the meeting was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Manager, Janice Hall and City Clerk, Regina Ivie.

Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Wilson stated two additional items needed to be added to the agenda after item number six.

- Approval of street closure request – Jonah’s on Johnston
- Convention & Visitors Bureau Quarterly Update by Gilda Stanbery

Approval of the Minutes from the October 5, 2020 Council Meeting

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Howard, Lawrence, Hewett and Dodd).

Approval of Pole Attachment Agreement with Cox Communications

Ms. Hall reviewed a standard agreement for overhead pole attachment with Cox Communications within the City; the project will be overhead and underground. A right of way agreement will be required for the underground portion of the agreement; it will come before Council once received. Mayor Wilson stated the agreement would allow them to serve commercial accounts for internet service only; no residential.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the agreement as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Howard, Lawrence, Hewett and Dodd).

Public Hearing – An ordinance for the designation of streets within the limits of the City of Forsyth to proceed in one direction. Tabled at October 5, 2020 Meeting

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing in favor of or opposition of the proposed ordinance.

Mr. Eric Thomas stated he isn’t certain the issue would get better; he hasn’t noticed a real traffic issue. He doesn’t see a problem with that portion of Kimball; it’s wide enough.

Mr. George Emami stated he’s doesn’t see that much traffic on that section of Kimball. He would prefer to leave it as it is; or do one way on Harris. Mr. Emami suggested to go South to North all the way to E Adams.

Mr. Stroud joined the meeting at 6:17 p.m. via zoom. All members of Council were present at this time therefore all unanimous votes will be six votes (Goolsby, Dodd, Stroud, Howard, Hewett, and Lawrence).

Ms. Hall stated that three letters from business owners were received; she and City Attorney, Bobby Melton recommended they be read aloud as public record during the public hearing.

Mayor Wilson read aloud letters from Burleigh L. Singleton, and emails from Steve Coleman and Jeff Castleberry. The letter and emails are included as part of the minutes. There being no further comments for or against the ordinance Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion change the direction of travel to one-way on Harris; North to South; leave the parking with no changes and Kimball Street one-way from Main Street to Adams – South to North; parking to be adjusted. Seconded by Mr. Stroud.

Mr. Stroud arrived in person at the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

After a lengthy discussion regarding the flow of traffic, parking issues, previous and current concerns regarding the area Mayor Wilson called for a vote on the motion; Mr. Hewett voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Stroud, Mr. Howard, Mr. Goolsby, Mr. Dodd and Mr. Lawrence voted against the motion; the motion failed.

Approval of street closure request – Jonah’s on Johnston

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

Convention & Visitors Bureau Quarterly Update – Gilda Stanbery

Ms. Stanbery provided a detailed report as to the financials and work being done for the Convention and Visitors Bureau for the past quarter.

Approval of Mutual Aid Agreement with GPSTC and Monroe County

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

Approval of authorization for distribution of Electric Cities of Georgia year end settlement

Ms. Hall recommended the City accept the year end settlement by issuance of a refund check from Electric Cities in the amount of \$8,104.68.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the year end settlement by check issued to the City from Electric Cities. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of street closure request for First Baptist Church – October 31, 2020

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

Approval of street closure request – Community Food Give Away – October 24, 2020

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

Approval of New Year’s Eve scheduled events

Ms. Hall inquired on behalf of Main Street about continuing with the New Year’s Eve Forsythia Ball Drop; securing a band for the event.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to move forward with the scheduled event for New Year’s Eve. Seconded by Mr. Dodd.

Mr. Lawrence inquired about participation. Mayor Wilson stated he didn't anticipate a large crowd. After some discussion with concerns of crowds and the current pandemic Mr. Hewett withdrew his motion. Seconded by Mr. Dodd.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to not move forward with planning an event for New Year's Eve. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried unanimously.

ECG Board Nomination

No motion for nomination was offered.

Approval of Requisitions Greater than \$5,000

BBP Sales LLC - \$9,775.00

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 to Council:

- Business incentive adopted several years ago included waiving the tap fees for water and sewer. This did not affect the cost to install the infrastructure from our existing main to their development. An issue that has come up is the infrastructure on Railroad Avenue. When the homes were demolished and the roadways abandoned and provided to the landowner, all existing infrastructure in place at the time was abandoned as well. A CDBG grant was used to install new infrastructure on James Street and DOC installed a new water line from Main Street to James Street. Unfortunately, there is no water or sewer available on Railroad Avenue between Lee Street and James Street. There is an easement across St. James Street Church property but if that easement is used, it will limit the areas of the property that the Church can build on as the easement runs through the middle of the property. I would like council to approve the City participating in the cost to run water from the 12" line at DOC and possibly connecting that line to the water line in Lee Street to loop that line and in the installation of the sewer line up James Street to Railroad rather than across the Church property. Georgia Manufactured Housing Association and State Farm have purchased property on Railroad Avenue and researching the best solution for water and sewer infrastructure. We do not have a cost associated with this project yet as this just came before 1st Step and we are working with their engineer to determine the most cost-effective solution.
- SeeClickFix has been fixed and issues submitted are being emailed as they should, and Nancy Patten is over this now and monitoring all submittals and responses.
- Safety Committee is back up and running. Nancy Patten has taken over this as well. If we follow all requirements of GMA, we will qualify to submit application for safety grants each year for public safety.
- The awning on the front of the Welcome Center is leaking and needs to be replaced. Macon Tent & Awning originally installed the awnings and we had them look at the awnings for replacement. If we replace only the front awning the cost will be \$1,045 (\$895 for awning and \$150 for wording). Replacing the front awning will make the other two show their age and need to be replaced as all 3 awnings are 12 years old. The cost to replace all 3 awnings would be \$5785 (\$5150 for awnings and \$300 for wording on 2 awnings). Do not need to decide tonight but with the front one leaking like it is, the new door is not protected as much as it would be with a new awning.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to replace all three awnings at a cost of \$5,785. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

- Received 3 bids to camera the storm drains on Adams to Railroad Avenue. The low bid has been contacted but have not heard back from them yet as to when they will get this scheduled. Low bid was \$2/foot for approximately 1700 feet of storm drain.
- Dog Park – 9 fire hydrants have been delivered to the high school art class to paint and then we will install in dog park. Signage at dog park has been moved to correct location.
- Sign at public safety building was destroyed last year in the hurricane and needs to be replaced. Chief Herndon and Chief Harris would like to install a message board in the signage along with the replacement of the sign that had Paul H. Jossey Public Safety Complex on it. The cost for the message board will be considerably more than just replacing the sign as it was but a message board will allow them to put public safety messages. Cost could be up to \$20,000. We would like to move forward with getting bids to move forward with message sign – this is not a budgeted item.
- Council asked that I contact GDOT regarding installation of a crosswalk on Lee Street at Adams Street. GDOT has conducted a Traffic Engineering Report for this request and submitted a preliminary report back for our review. They are proposed installing a crosswalk between the Welcome Center building and Castleberry Drug rather than at one of the intersections. I have added their report to Google Drive for you to review. They would like Council to review this report and provide feedback to GDOT.
- Kynette Park building was vandalized last weekend. This time they destroyed the doors from the restrooms into the community building and destroyed the cabinetry in the community room. We are getting repair cost together in hopes that our police department can determine who was responsible for the damage and include restitution in their charges. I would like to pursue changing the building into a pavilion rather than a community building so that it will be used more but that would require a lot of changes to the building. The new mulch in the playground is being dug up and the underlayment pulled up as well. We are not sure what the solution to this problem is, but we are doing some research. We are changing out the automatic water and toilet systems with regular faucets and toilet fixtures as the automatic ones are not working due to ongoing damage.
- Country Club Park restrooms are being vandalized as well. We have had the septic tank pumped due to amount of paper towels being flushed. We have had to have toilets unstopped several times due to the paper towels being flushed. We are removing the paper towel holders and installing air hand dryers. The sand at the playground at Country Club Park swings has been replaced and the decaying mulch at the play system has been removed along with the wooden barriers surrounding the area. We will allow grass to grow in this area.
- Steve Jones had mentioned that he had received a couple of complaints that people were having a hard time finding Rest Haven cemetery. The public works guys have cut back the trees and underbrush on both sides of the brick pillars so that they can be seen when driving in either direction. Unless someone knows of a special meaning behind the shrubs that are planted in front of the brick pillars that have the cemetery sign on it, we will remove those shrubs so the sign can be seen even better.
- The project to repair the access road to the back portion of the City Cemetery has been completed. The pipe has been installed under the roadbed and rip rap has been installed in the ditch to direct storm water away from the road and prevent additional damage. We do need to install crusher run in several areas of the cemetery due to the condition of the roadbed. A rare Basswood Tree was found during this work and we will work to clear out around the tree and protect it as well.

- New fire truck should be ready for inspection October 27. Chief Herndon will drive to Tampa to do the inspection. Once truck has passed his inspection, the company will deliver truck.
- Utility Partners and Hofstadter are working to determine a location on Tobesofkee Creek up from the reservoir as required by EPD.
- Working with Pyles Plumbing on televising the sewer line on Highway 83 North where the sink hole developed last week. Also waiting on cost estimate from Pyles. GDOT has approved an emergency permit for the work once project is determined. This could be an expensive repair.
- Boom mower is at company for repairs that we are not able to perform. Hope to have it back this week.
- The project to raise our electric lines over the railroad as required by Norfolk Southern has been completed.
- Bids for reconductor project on Country Club Drive came back considerably more than Mike Batchelor had estimated. We will perform the section of underground and may have to wait on the overhead due to cost.
- The power outage last weekend was due to large tree limb from tree on King Street. Electric Department has removed the tree with the permission of the property owner.
- Rumble strips on Jones Street have been removed.
- Sidewalk crew will be working on curb and gutter on Bennett Street to replace section that was damaged.
- Pellicano is working on revised timeline and I should have that this week. They stated completion is still on schedule but timeline for different areas of work has changed.
- Traffic Calming Policy is being worked on, but I just did not have time to get it completed. In reviewing the information that Mr. Latch has discussed at several meetings and comparing that to the speed humps we already have, I recommend that we continue with the type that we have previously installed. The ones we have are made from asphalt and have the same life expectancy as the roads they are installed on. The ones made from recycled material have a life expectancy of 2-4 years and must be anchored in the roadway. I would like to recommend purchasing at least 2 solar powered radar signs. We currently have 2 of the ones purchased several years ago but those must be hardwired into electricity and they are too old to run reports needed. The company we purchased them from will give us a \$1,000 trade in for each against the cost of solar sign. We can use those signs to do traffic count and speed study that will be included in the Traffic Calming Policy. These signs are not meant to be moved on a regular basis due to their weight. Additionally, we need to look at installing crosswalks on Adams Street at Harris and Kimball Streets. We will need to use these radar signs to determine if appropriate but at the very least we need painted crosswalks to encourage people to cross at the intersections.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the purchase of two solar powered radar signs at a cost of \$5,560. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney Report

Mr. Melton stated the City prevailed in the arbitration with the County regarding the annexation of H&H Timberlands LLC; a couple of recommendations are forth coming. The County has ten days to appeal the decision. Mr. Melton further stated the public hearing was held on July 20, 2020; the County filed an objection therefore the final decision on the proposed ordinance was tabled. The City's code states a decision must be made within sixty five days from the date of the public hearing; eighty two days has passed since the public hearing; my recommendation is to advertise as a public hearing for the November 16, 2020 Council Meeting to take final action.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to advertise for a public hearing on November 16th regarding the H&H Timberlands LLC Annexation. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Wilson had no further business to report.

Additional Business

No additional business was brought forward.

Public Comments

Darren Lynch @ 285 E Main Street expressed his appreciation for reaching out to him regarding his research on the speed humps; the costs have been reduced. There are various options available for installation. He appreciates the placement of the police car on the street; it seems to be working.

Angel Lynch @ 285 E main Street expressed gratitude for Mayor & Council listening to their concerns.

Executive Session

No executive session was held.

Adjourn

There being no further City business to discuss Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried unanimously. The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.