Minutes
Forsyth City Council Meeting
November 16, 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. Stroud gave the invocation. In attendance for the meeting in person was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Julius Stroud, Greg Goolsby, Mike Dodd and Chris Howard. In attendance via zoom were Councilmembers John Howard and Melvin Lawrence. Also, in attendance for the meeting in person was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Manager, Janice Hall and City Clerk, Regina Ivie. All members of council were in attendance for the meeting therefore all unanimous votes will be six votes (Dodd, Goolsby, Stroud, Lawrence, Howard, and Hewett).

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 from the October 19, 2020 and November 2, 2020 Council Meeting
Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the minutes for the October 19, 2020 and November 2, 2020 Council meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

Presentation by Eric Thomas
Mr. Eric Thomas of Jonah's Pizza presented a framed photo to Councilmember Greg Goolsby of Greg's father, Mr. Jim Goolsby who recently passed away. Mr. Jim Goolsby was pictured at the angel wings mural at Jonah's on Johnston; his picture will be displayed at the restaurant.

Public Hearing – Proposed ordinance providing for the alteration and amendment of the corporate boundaries of the City of Forsyth through annexation, and for the alteration and amendment of the zoning district and zoning map
Mr. Melton stated the proposed ordinance is to annex six parcels of land, 1036 acres into the City limits of Forsyth; and zoned Rural Agriculture which is compatible with zoning of the County. It was previously presented to Council at a public hearing on July 20, 2020. County had made objection to the proposed annexation; pursuant to Georgia state law was referred to an arbitration panel composed of five members. An arbitration hearing was held where the City, the applicant and Monroe County Commissioners were all represented. Mr. Melton further stated the annexation could proceed; arbitration panel found no reason to uphold the objection from Monroe County. At the July 20, 2020 the matter was tabled; per City code a ruling is required within sixty-five days. Tonight's public hearing is to carry out the City's own requirements under the City's zoning code. It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on October 28, November 4, and November 11, 2020. Planning and Zoning recommended approval to Council; all requirements were met.

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

Mr. Tye Hannah at 4268 Riverview Drive spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance and stated the annexation application was filed June 15; a notice period, a public hearing, and public discussion was done. Mr. Hannah; one of the property owners offered to answer all questions truthfully regarding the project and plans for the property.

Mr. Lewis G. Young at 15 Harper Lane spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. He stated H&H Timbers land backs up to his property of 5 acres. He further stated he doesn't want industrial park in his back yard; he's concerned with the commercial vehicle traffic, noise, pollution, and the effect of property values in the area.

Mr. Bryan Perry at 199 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. He expressed his concerns over police response times to the proposed property being that far from City limits with only two officers working per shift; doesn't want to live next to another industrial park.

Mr. Gary Bell at 273 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. Mr. Bell inquired about the zoning change timeline process. Mr. Melton stated one year minimum is required by state law. Mr. Bell expressed his concerns regarding the economic impact on the City after sewer, water pipes have been installed; and the quality of life with increased traffic, and noise in the area.

Ms. Cathy Harris at 199 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. She stated they moved from Henry County to escape the traffic, chaos and non – sense this type of establishment creates.

Mr. Scott Tankard at 125 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. He stated the proposed annexation is not helping to beautify the area in any way.

Mr. James Stiles at 243 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the ordinance. He stated he moved from Henry County for the reasons previously stated; crime and traffic. Mr. Stiles reviewed crime statistics for the last 7 years; he's concerned about the spike in reported crimes in the area and ambulatory, fire and police services being able to take care of that area.

Mr. George Emami at 106 Chase Lane; represents District 4 of Monroe County spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. He stated he has met with Mr. Hannah multiple times; a very genuine person. He doesn't doubt his intent with the property isn't as stated. He feels that just because it can be done doesn't make it ethical, does not make it right. He feels that it's being done regardless to the County's objections. Mr. Emami further stated the county welcomes growth, and industry; further expressed that Council consider the complexion of the overall county. In closing Mr. Emami stated that if the ordinance is approved, he requested 150-foot minimum setbacks, vegetative buffers, no racetracks, no adult entertainment establishments, a traffic study be completed; and that the developer be responsible all road improvements.

Mr. Baxter Evans at 111 Piedmont Circle stated Monroe County needs a long-term land use master plan; the biggest industry is home building. Mr. Evans offered his services at no charge. He requested that Council consider tabling the matter.

Mr. Carl Schmidt at 270 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. He referred to various reasons for the land use he's heard; water, sewage, and jobs per the Monroe Reporter. He inquired as to what the plans for this land are. Mayor Wilson stated if you have a party that has land that is being requested to be annexed into the City; what would your position be?

Mr. Ben Vaughn, Monroe County Attorney at 20 W. Main Street spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance on behalf of Monroe County. He referenced a master plan; developer has no intentions of keeping this land agriculture. The development is not consistent with comprehensive land use plan, service delivery strategy, water contracts. The County is concerned about the lack of planning with this property, the lengths the developer, and the City are willing to go to develop this property. The developer plans to run utilities to the property then sell the property. Mr. Vaughn further stated the County and City have a whole lot of projects they can and do work on for the betterment of the Monroe County; great strides in collaborative efforts. The County would like to continue those efforts; work closely with the City for what's best Monroe County. The County firmly believes this property should be left within the County. Mr. Vaughn provided copies of the County's objection, arbitration panel's findings, and H&H master plan into the City's record.

Mr. Mac McGraw at 186 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. Mr. McGraw stated he's convinced the proposed ordinance will ruin our sense of community. He inquired as to why the City wants to annex the property. He requested that the City reject the request to annex the property.

Mr. Horace Channey spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. He expressed his concerns regarding the large trucks, speed and volume of traffic in the area. Mr. Channey further stated an industrial park would be inappropriate in that area; property values would go down.

Ms. Stephanie Watson at 60 Orchard Ridge Drive spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. Ms. Watson requested a map of the property H&H owns. She stated there are not many options for access to the property due to the large landowners around it.

Mayor Wilson stated he cares about things that affect the County. The proposed ordinance before us tonight is for annexation; there is no proposed change in zoning currently. A zoning application would be considered only after the appropriate process was completed through Planning and Zoning. We hear, understand and empathize with your position.

Mr. Tye Hannah with H&H Timberlands was given the opportunity by Mayor Wilson to address the concerns brought forward by the public. He clarified that the property was purchased in 2004. Since 2004 we have tried to work with the County as to how to get water, sewer and resources to the property. We were advised no resources will be available anytime in the future by Monroe County. Mr. Hannah further stated that six months prior to applying for annexation three different meetings and several phones calls with County Commissioners, City Officials and officials from the Development Authority were done; conversations and meetings began in October 2019. He stated he's offered to donate land to Monroe County for fire and emergency services in the surrounding area. There are not definitive plans for the property.

There being no further comments for or against the proposed ordinance Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to deny the annexation application and zoning change as presented; seconded by Mr. Hewett. After a lengthy discussion Mayor Wilson called for a vote on the motion; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of application for licenses for the sale of alcoholic beverages by Michael Buss of Buss Market Inc. d/b/a French Market & Tavern at 22 West Main Street

Mr. Melton stated the application is for a license for the sale of alcoholic beverages at 22 West Main Street, tax parcel F26049; advertised in the Monroe Reporter on November 4, 2020 and November 11, 2020. Ms. Hall stated fingerprints had not been received yet; recommended final approval after receiving fingerprints.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the application for the sale of alcoholic beverages upon receipt of fingerprints. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Agreement with EnviroTron.com

Ms. Hall reviewed an agreement from EnviroTron.com for fogging of City buildings at $981 per quarter that includes a 15% discount. The microbial fogging is effective for 90 days. Ms. Hall recommended approval of the agreement.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the agreement with EnviroTron.com at $981 per quarter. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Senate Bill 345 – "Sandwich Bill"

Ms. Gina Smith with Monroe County Health Department reviewed that the responsibility falls on the sponsoring agency to do the permitting and inspections. The County could do the inspections for a fee; the City would handle the application and permitting process. Any booth preparing food would have to be inspected. Ms. Hall recommended in the interim Monroe County Public Health Department conduct the inspections.

After further discussion Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to allow the County Health Department to conduct the inspections for food service as needed. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of disposition of MEAG energy sales margins to City

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to deposit the sales margins into the City's Municipal Competitive Flexible Trust; Flexible Operating Account Intermediate Extended Maturity Account. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Electric Cities of Georgia 2020 Board Election Ballot

Ms. Hall stated Mayor Wilson is the voting delegate; Mr. Dodd is the alternate. The voting deadline is December 7, 2020.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to allow Mayor Wilson and Mr. Dodd to discuss and cast the ballot for the 2020 Electric Cities of Georgia election. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

2021 Proposed Budget Presentation

Ms. Hall reviewed changes made within certain departments relating to certain expense line items, personnel and the 2021 proposed budget. Overall revenues for the general fund are $3,641,503; combined utilities revenues $14,752,000 for a total of $18,393,503. Adoption of this budget will require an almost $4 million transfer from the combined utilities fund to the general fund to have a balanced budget. General Fund $7,631,688 budget; included in this budget is a salary increase of four percent for employees. We are adding two additional full-time police officers on patrol. The 2021 budget is $685,000 higher

than the 2020 budget; $370,000 for the New City Hall building and additional salaries. Hotel-Motel budget has been decreased; budgeting $365,500. Adoption of the budget by resolution will be presented to Council at the December 7, 2020 meeting.

Approval of Requisitions Greater than $5,000
Hydrocal, LLC – Composite Sampler $7,129.00

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

City Manager's Report
Ms. Hall provided the following report to Council:
- 2nd Council meeting in December is on the 21st; didn't know if you wanted meet on the Monday before Christmas or not

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to conduct one Council meeting in December on December 7, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

- DDA discussed having a decorating contest for Christmas for businesses and homes; Main Street will work out the details for judging and awarding the prize money
- November 28 will be Shop Small Day and virtual Tree Lighting ceremony; businesses will have extended hours and sales
- Working on additional lighting on W Johnston Street between Jackson and Phelps
- Shared 2021 Professional Appointments and Board Appointments list on Google Drive; please review those whose terms will be expiring 12/31 for reappointment or replacement
- Shared 2021 proposed budget report and presentation given tonight on Google Drive; as you review those please let me know if you have any questions
- New fire truck went in service last week
- Had to return the solar radar signs as they sent the ones without the cell card; not only did our firewall made it difficult for them to download the reports, it was a time consuming process to go out to the sign, connect to it, and then go back to the office to transfer the data over and run the reports. The cell card allows access with password from the office
- Sewer line replacement at Cabiness & N Frontage is underway; contractor will bore under Highway 83 N and hope not to hit rock; will set 2 additional manholes to accommodate the direction of the lines; we are having a hard time locating the water line that runs under Highway 83, CC&A spent 2 full days last week trying to locate it and will continue this week – this is an additional cost over the original as time included for locates did not cover this additional time
- Highway 41/Main Street project has a NTP of 11/30; held pre-con and large project meetings; new water line will begin just beyond Phelps Street and connect to the 12" line out 41 at the sawmill; this new line will greatly increase water pressure from the sawmill to the square
- The electric department will work tomorrow (Tuesday) to replace the feeder line that was pulled down by the wreck last weekend; thank you to the Sheriff's Office for providing rolling road blocks on the interstate while our guys work; those in that small area on and around Russell Parkway will be without power for a couple of hours – Mike has delivered notices to those businesses
- Getting bids to remove several trees along W Johnston Street that are dead and/or diseased
- Bonus checks will be given out next week
- Administration offices will close at noon on Wednesday, November 23rd with those employees taking accrued leave not holiday pay
- Reminded all department heads about additional holiday for all veterans and that time is included in the rewrite of the Personnel Manual
- Project updates:
    - QuikTrip – received architect plans and reviewing those to see if any changes need to be made
    - Waffle House on Lee will be doing complete remodel; coming to 1st Step this week
    - Big Peach Car Wash – grading is in full swing and work to uncover the drains in the retention pond was accomplished; owner still weighing his options on whether to appeal to Health Dept to install a well for irrigation or not

- Ingram Entities is back working on the Apartments above French Market & Tavern; this will require him to run a 6" water line down sidewalk to Chambers Street to connect to water main there; this is needed for sprinkler and is required by State Fire Marshal
- City Hall contractor says we are still on schedule for end of March 2021 completion
- Still working with Comfort Inn, AJ Patel and Valero on their alcohol license applications; once received we will begin the advertising process and bring before council for a public hearing

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. Hewett stated the Housing Authority will not hold a meeting in December.

Mr. Goolsby stated Downtown Development Authority met last week. The façade grant has been very successful; we match $1,000. We are looking into a yearly small business grant; more information forth coming soon. Mr. Goolsby mentioned two concerns on W. Johnston Street; additional lighting and the safety issues with the steps at Pickled Okra.

Public Comments
No one came forward for public comments.

Executive Session
No executive session was held.

Adjourn
Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting at 8:48 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.