

MINUTES

FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

NOVEMBER 19, 2018

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, INVOCATION, AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation. Present for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Greg Goolsby, Chris Hewett, and Melvin Lawrence. Also present was City Attorney, Bobby Melton, and City Manager, Janice Hall.

Councilman John Howard was unable to attend the meeting; therefore, all unanimous votes will be five (5) votes for (Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, Hewett, and Lawrence).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Wilson reviewed that Mrs. Hall has requested to move the Discussion regarding the IGA with the DDA up in the agenda to allow Mrs. Pierson to leave after the discussion and Mr. Melton has requested to add approval of a Resolution increase the hotel tax. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Mr. Hewett the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING

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

PUBLIC HEARING – REZONING REQUEST FOR F42 001, PROPERTY FRONTING BERNER AVENUE - OWNER ESTATE OF CATHERINE H NEWTON – REZONE FROM TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT TO HIGHWAY BUSINESS DISTRICT

Mr. Melton stated that if approved, the rezone will require approval of an ordinance amendment to the zoning district and the zoning map and that the matter has been properly advertised in the October 31, November 7 and 14 issues of the Reporter. Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing and asked for a show of hands for all in attendance in favor of the rezoning request. Mayor Wilson called on Mrs. Pierson, Zoning Officer and Mrs. Pierson reviewed that the matter was presented to Planning & Zoning Board and they recommend approval to Office Professional rather than Highway Business; either zoning will allow for the type business that the applicant is requesting; and the property abuts Traditional Neighborhood and Manufacturing Industrial zones. Mayor Wilson called on applicant, Kevin Smith for comments. Dr. Smith reviewed that he has a mobile veterinary business and that he needs a consistent location to run the mobile vet from. Dr. Smith stated that he basically needs a parking lot and works out of the mobile vet van on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of each week and will not require a building on the property. Mr. Stroud requested clarification on the exact location and Mrs. Pierson provided pictures of the lot. Mr. Stroud asked the difference between Office Professional and Highway Business and Mrs. Pierson reviewed that Office Professional is primarily for offices while Highway Business is the most lenient for any commercial business. Mrs. Pierson stated that the discussion at the Planning & Zoning Board meeting surrounded around not wanting to open the area to large commercial businesses and preferred the Office Professional zoning and Dr. Smith and the property owner is in agreement with either zoning. Dr. Smith stated that he requested commercial zoning and does not have a preference as to which zoning is approved. Mayor Wilson asked if there were any opposed to the rezoning request and no one came forward. Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the rezoning request from Traditional Neighborhood Development to Office Professional. Seconded by Mr. Hewett, the motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION REGARDING INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR RENOVATIONS FOR OLD CITY HALL

Mrs. Hall stated that when she asked Mr. Melton if he had sufficient information from the council meeting and DDA meeting to write the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the City and DDA, Mr. Melton stated that he needed additional information regarding what work was to be included in the \$125,000 and who would management the project. Mr. Goolsby stated that his motion was to match up to \$125,000 and that was to include everything. After a lengthy discussion regarding the IGA, the work anticipated to be done, the cost of work to be done, and what is to be included in the money being allocated for the project, Mayor Wilson reviewed that the \$125,000 match by the city is to include everything with no exclusions to be handled by the city outside of the match. Mrs. Pierson stated that the DDA is working just on the exterior repairs that need to be done and not interior work so that is why she was requesting clarification. Mayor Wilson reviewed that the building has been deeded to the DDA and they should do what needs to be done. Mrs. Hall asked Mr. Melton if council has now provided him with the information he needs to write the IGA and he stated that he needs to know who will manage the funds so that information can be included in the IGA.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Downtown Development Authority for renovations to the city hall and city hall annex buildings, to loan the DDA up to \$125,000 at 2% interest, to match up to \$125,000 for the renovations, and the DDA will manage the project and fund allocations. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL TO ADVERTISE AMENDMENT TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE ORDINANCE WITH REGARD TO SUNDAY BRUNCH REFERENDUM ON NOVEMBER BALLOT

Mr. Melton reviewed that the Sunday Brunch Referendum passed on the November ballot and the ordinance must be amended to reflect this change.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to advertise the ordinance amendment. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL TO SUBMIT BALLOT FOR SEPA PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE CUSTOMER REPRESENTATIVE

Mrs. Hall reviewed the ballot stating that only one name is on the ballot, but she needs council approval to submit the ballot.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the ballot for SEPA. Seconded by Mr. Dodd the motion carried unanimously.

AUTHORIZATION FOR VOLUNTARY DEPOSITS INTO THE MUNICIPAL COMPETITIVE TRUST

Mrs. Hall reviewed that the voluntary deposit currently being made is basically a transfer of MEAG credits from one account to another; is a little over \$10,000 per month; and is transferred into the Flexible Operating account, Intermediate Extended Maturity Portfolio.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve depositing the credits received into the MCT Flexible Operating account, Intermediate Extended Maturity Portfolio. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

AUTHORIZATION FOR OFF SYSTEM SALES DEPOSITS INTO THE MUNICIPAL COMPETITIVE TRUST

Mrs. Hall reviewed that the Off System Sales deposits have been being made into the Flexible Operating account, Intermediate Extended Maturity Portfolio and recommended continuing to do so with future deposits.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve depositing the Off System Sales received into the MCT Flexible Operating account, Intermediate Extended Maturity Portfolio. Seconded by Mr. Hewett, the motion carried with four (4) votes for (Dodd, Goolsby, Hewett, and Lawrence). Mr. Stroud was out of the room at the time of the vote and therefore did not vote.

DISCUSSION REGARDING PETITION RECEIVED FROM NORFOLK SOUTHERN TO CLOSE INDIAN SPRINGS DRIVE RAILROAD CROSSING

Mrs. Hall reviewed that Norfolk Southern has submitted a Petition and this matter is on the agenda for tonight for Mr. Melton to review the process and how council should move forward. Mr. Melton stated that a public hearing is required but the law is silent as to when the public hearing is to be held. Mr. Melton recommended that a court reporter be present at the public hearing to record all comments. Mr. Melton stated that Norfolk Southern has submitted the Petition to close Indian Springs Drive crossing and included additional data with the Petition. Mrs. Hall reviewed the conversation she had with Mr. Will Miller, Norfolk Southern, wherein he stated that the city is required to hold a public hearing within 60 days of receipt of the Petition and then has 30 days after the public hearing to render a decision. Mr. Dodd asked if city denies the Petition and a ruling is made to force the closing of the crossing, who would be responsible for any attorney fees and Mr. Melton stated that the city could be liable for Norfolk Southern attorney fees and additional fees. Mr. Stroud suggested holding the public hearing on January 21, 2019 at 5:30 pm in Aldermen Hall and by general consensus, council agreed.

APPROVAL OF CHRISTMAS BONUS FOR EMPLOYEES

Mrs. Hall reviewed amounts provided for Christmas bonuses last year as \$300 for fulltime employees with over 1 year of service, \$150 for fulltime employees with less than 1 year of service, and \$100 for part time employees. Mrs. Hall stated that the city covers the taxes on the bonus checks so that the employee receives a check for the full amount of the approved bonus.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the Christmas bonuses as recommended by the City Manager. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence the motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF PROPOSED 2019 BUDGET

Mrs. Hall reviewed the proposed budget stating that she prepared a brief summary for everyone. Mrs. Hall reviewed the General Fund revenues and expenses and transfer from Combined Utility Fund required to balance the General Fund. Mrs. Hall reviewed the Combined Utility Fund revenues and expenses. Mrs. Hall stated that the proposed budget includes a 3% across the board raise for all employees with an additional 2% increase for all sworn police officers. Mrs. Hall stated that an additional 2% increase for all employees would be an additional \$45,000. Mrs. Hall reviewed the only changes to the proposed budget made since the first presentation is a new line item for Main Street for marketing of \$2,500 and increase to the electric and water utility expense line items to include the electric and water bills for the golf course which totals approximately \$7,500 for electric and \$800 for water. Mr. Stroud asked why the police officers were singled out for a 5% increase when all others would receive a 3% increase and Mrs. Hall stated that the Ad Hoc Police Committee recommended increasing the starting salary for police officers for next year. Mrs. Hall further reviewed that any budget amounts that are changed from the previous year must be manually keyed in so she began with the proposed budget numbers and keyed those in to see any excess amounts. When all corrections were made, the final proposed budget that was presented in October had an excess of \$91,613 so she manually calculated what an additional 2% increase in the other departments would be but did not change those numbers until the information could be presented to council and approved to move forward. Council discussed the need for a pay scale and asked Mrs. Hall to have

this completed within first 6 months of 2019. Mrs. Hall stated the proposed budget public hearing is being advertised for December 3, 2018 and adoption of the 2019 budget for December 17, 2018.

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE INVOICES - \$257,193.02

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the accounts payable as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried with four (4) votes for (Stroud, Goolsby, Hewett, and Lawrence) and one (1) abstention (Dodd).

APPROVAL OF REQUISITIONS GREATER THAN \$5,000

- a. Core & Main – 48 electric meters - \$7,035.84

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

REPORTS

CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Shop Small event November 24 at 10:00 am
- Gingerbread House Contest November 26 at 5:00 pm the Christmas tree lighting Monday at 6:00 pm on the square
- Ribbon cutting for Forsyth Foxhunt in Lee Street Park, November 29 at 10:00 am. They will be serving hot chocolate and cookies
- Christmas parade Thursday, November 29 at 7:00. We are riding KOA train again this year so must be in line by 6:30
- City of Culloden hosting their 1st Annual Christmas part and invited mayor and council to attend. Event will be December 12 at 6:00 pm at The Barn in Culloden.
- Holly Bisig will attend annual retreat in January to review MEAG and Municipal Competitive Trust.
- Will begin advertisement for alcohol license change of ownership for Pickled Okra and Jonah on Johnston's.
- Scoops has asked if we could/would remove the planting areas beside the steps on the side of old city hall.
- Membership dues for GMA will increase to \$1975.62 – previously on July-June fiscal year and changed this year to calendar year. 7/17-6/18 was \$1971.56. GMA announced not had a dues increase in 10 years while announcing a 2% increase for 2019; 4% in 2020, 2021, and 2022; and 5% in 2023. If members of retirement, workers compensation, or property & liability plans will receive rebates based on participation. We are members of retirement and workers compensation only.
- Provided copies of board appointments with terms expiration and/or vacant highlighted. Terms expire in December so would like to start making reappointments/appointments before the end of year if possible.
- RFP for landscape architect is out and already received four requests for packets. Proposals are due to Regional Commission by 12/14 at 4:00 pm
- BCBS has returned with a flat renewal; received quote from one other and it was 10% higher than BCBS. Would like approval to move forward with BCBS. Getting quotes on dental and vision as well. Hope to hold open enrollment 12/4 & 5. Council agreed.
- GDOT has been working with the Sheriff's department on the intersection of N. Frontage Road and Highway 42 North; it was determined in a meeting between the prior sheriff and GDOT that the intersection poses a less than ideal situation and GDOT launched a Quick Response Project to

realign the intersection there. They are already working to close the current intersection and the cut-thru access and install a new intersection that will require traffic on N. Frontage to make a turn and not just merge into traffic as was happening. Mr. Dodd voiced concern over the project and stated that additional information is needed to know how this will affect Georgia Forestry as they have a lot of vehicles in and out of their property.

- Holiday closing – city hall and welcome center will close at noon on Wednesday. All other departments will be here until their regular time. All offices will be closed Thursday and Friday in observance of Thanksgiving.
- Mrs. Hall wished everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving holiday

Mr. Hewett stated that the “yield sign” still has not been installed by DOT at the entrance ramp on I75 and Mrs. Hall stated that they have now said that a yield sign is not needed at that entrance and they will not be installing a yield sign.

Mr. Lawrence asked what the city policy is for speed bumps and Mrs. Hall stated that we do not have a policy other than when we installed some several years ago, the Board of Education complained that the speed bumps were causing major damage to their buses.

Mr. Stroud asked that the rumble strips on Johnston at the 4-way stop sign be removed as they look bad where they are coming up.

Mr. Goolsby stated that the new members of the DDA need their training and stated that the DDA discussed attending Mayors Day in January and participating in the Council Retreat on Sunday.

Mr. Dodd stated that council needs the Board appointment/reappointment list before a decision is to be made on them as several of the boards have poor attendance and the members need to be reviewed before just reappointing. Mrs. Hall stated that board appointments had historically been made at the first meeting in January but the last two years council has tabled the reappointments until after the retreat to allow time to review the appointments so she is providing them early this year in hopes to make the appointments by end of year or at least at the first council meeting of 2019 to allow the boards to continue to meet for their regularly scheduled meetings.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Wilson offered the following report:

- He and Mrs. Hall attended the county commissioners meeting and presented the park plan and requested that the county give the property to the city. After discussion, the county commissioners voted 4 to 1 to give the property to the city with the condition that a dog park is installed within 9 months.
- Reviewed several conferences that he has attended lately
 - o Good updates received at the Mayors Summit
 - o Became a Certified Board member of Technical College Directors
 - o Good updates from legislature at the Georgia Association of Regional Commissioners Board meeting and additional information will be coming out soon regarding pole attachments
 - o GDOT engineer provided update at the I75 Corridor meeting on the proposed truck lanes
- Attended the quarterly hoteliers meeting and asked them how they felt about increasing the hotel tax and those in attendance were in favor of increasing to 6 or 7% so long as the dollars are reinvested in the community. Also asked how their guest liked receiving the Welcome bags when

given out to evacuees and all stated the guest appreciate them. Largest concern from the hoteliers is lack of reliable internet and Commissioner Emami was present and reviewed the county position on this.

- Discussed that retreat has been held on Sunday of Mayors Day in January and asked if council wanted to continue holding then and all agreed. Retreat will be held on Sunday, January 27, 2019 from 8:00 am until noon. Mr. Stroud stated that he would like to see council hold a mid-year retreat while in Savannah or Amelia Island to discuss where we are and council agreed.

ADDITIONAL COUNCIL REPORTS

Mr. Stroud stated that with the county giving the back park property to the city, he would like to look at renaming the park.

Mr. Stroud requested that a public hearing be held regarding the potential of changing Kimball and Harris Streets to one-way streets.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he will be attending the Cyber Workshop on November 27 at the MEAG building. Mr. Dodd stated that he will also try to attend. Mayor Wilson stated that he, Mrs. Hall, and Mrs. Pierson will be meeting with officials in the City of Monroe on that day and will not be able to attend.

National Guard sendoff will be Monday, November 26 at 2:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (MAYOR WILSON TO REVIEW RULES FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

County Commission Chairman Greg Tapley was recognized by Mayor Wilson and Chairman Tapley stated he came in late as he was attending the last sheriff debate, early voting will begin November 26 for the December 4 runoff. Chairman Tapley stated that he has received good comments back from the film group stating they were very appreciative of the willingness of everyone to work with them.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was not a need for an executive session.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Manager