

## **MINUTES**

### **FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL RETREAT**

**JANUARY 21, 2018**

Mayor Wilson called the annual retreat to order at 9:00 am at the Atlanta Marriott Hotel. Present for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Greg Goolsby, Dexter King, and Melvin Lawrence. Councilman Julius Stroud was unable to attend the meeting due to recent surgery but attended via phone; therefore all unanimous votes will be five (5) votes for. Also present was City Manager, Janice Hall.

Councilman Chris Hewett was unable to attend the meeting.

Mayor Wilson reviewed some housekeeping items and stated that the meeting would break at 11:45 am for all to attend the awards luncheon.

Mrs. Hall reviewed issues discussed at the 2016 and 2017 retreats.

Mr. Goolsby reviewed the telecommunications meeting that he attended while at the conference and stated that a Bill is at the state level now which addresses pole attachments for antennas for telecommunications companies but does not address problems that rural areas are having. Mr. Goolsby stated that the telecomm industry is asking for a flat pole attachment rate of \$20/pole statewide. Mayor Wilson stated that the telecomm industry is calling it “rural broadband” and does not want to deal with individual cities.

### **GOALS FOR 2018**

Each council member shared ideas/areas that they wanted to work on in 2018 and those are:

- Annexation of all areas that receive city services; adopt policy that future development must annex to have city services
- Master plan for parks
- 2020 SPLOST
- Archway for downtown on Lee Street
- old city hall building – possibly deed to DDA to create revenue stream for DDA; need to determine what to do with the building
- utility rates for all services
- telecommunications pole attachments
- better code enforcement especially buildings that need upkeep – need stronger enforcement
- rename park – Peavy Park – consider all as one park (Country Club Park)
- make sure all boards are functional

- look at all gateways
- wellness program
- tag reader
- focus on tractor trailer traffic – enforce laws to redirect out of downtown; need signage too
- affordable housing – needs to research how to get better housing; downtown apartments; special district to encourage loft apartments
- hotel/motel tax – look at increasing tax
- Indian Springs Business Park – look into city control and have city Economic Development work on – either purchase or partner with County Development Authority
- CVB – focus; where to locate
- Partner with BOE for bus transit system in city during day and/or after hours
- Community involvement – establish neighborhood walks
- Hold Town Hall meetings at least annually; find out how to get citizens involved; possibly hold at other locations
- Blighted properties
- Entertainment venues
- Recruitment of major food, sit-down restaurants
- Automatic touchless car wash
- Put code enforcement under Economic Development

Council discussed each of these ideas/areas and determined that some were already being worked on by the City Manager. Council worked to revise the list as follows:

- Annexation
- Archway for Lee Street
- Old city hall – determine what to do with the building
- Utility rate review and pole attachment review
- 2020 SPLOST
- Blighted properties/code enforcement
- Rename Country Club Park
- Gateway improvements
- Housing – affordable and loft apartments (need variety)
- Revisit increase of hotel tax

- Economic Development – Indian Springs Business Park, recruitment of restaurants, car wash, entertainment venues
- School buses for transit buses
- Town hall meetings annually

Council voted as to their importance of each idea/area and the results were, in priority order:

1. Annexation
2. Blighted properties/code enforcement
3. Gateway improvements
4. Economic Development
5. Archway
6. 2020 SPLOST
7. Old city hall building
8. Housing
9. Rates
10. Hotel tax
11. Bus system
12. Town Hall meetings

#### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS AND CONTRACT**

Mrs. Hall stated that professional appointments are made at the first meeting in January each year. Mrs. Hall stated that the new parent company of Utility Partners states that the records they have show the contract with the city expired December 31, 2017 and our records show it will expire December 31, 2018. Mrs. Hall asked council to reaffirm extension of the contract with Utility Partners to expire December 31, 2018. Mrs. Hall stated that this is the year to send out RFQ on all professional services. Mr. Dodd offered a motion to extend the contract with Utility Partners until December 31, 2018 to include the annual increase as approved in the last amendment. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Hall stated that Utility Partners is interested in adding the parks and golf course to the contract.

#### **Historic Preservation Commission**

- Guidelines not approved and all members resigned
- Need an Ad-Hoc Committee to study need to HPC. Mr. Dodd called for an Ad-Hoc Committee to consist of Mr. Ralph Bass, Mr. Hal Clarke, and Mr. Tom Perry and Mr. Lawrence seconded

the motion. The motion carried with four (4) votes for (Dodd, Stroud, King, and Lawrence) and one (1) vote against (Goolsby).

- Discussed having HPC come under P&Z
- Mr. Dodd readdressed the committee later in the meeting and offered a motion to dissolve the committee and instruct the City Manager to work on this research. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion to dissolve the committee carried unanimously.

### **Planning & Zoning**

Mrs. Hall reviewed that this is the new board formed by the changes to the Zoning Ordinance, further stating that the members listed are the current active members of the P&Z and Design & Review Boards. All term expiration dates will remain the same. Mr. King offered a motion to reappoint Mr. Clarke to the P&Z Board. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

### **DDA/Main Street Board**

- Mr. Goolsby offered a motion for the City Manager to research the possibility of dissolving the Main Street Board. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously
- Seth Berkebiles term expired December 31, 2017; Mr. Stroud stated that Mr. Berkebile is very busy and just does not have time to sit on the board
- Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to reappoint Mrs. Shirley Henderson to the board for a 4 year term. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously
- Mr. Dodd offered a motion to appoint Wes Cone to fill the unexpired term of Ralph Ogletree (term to expire 12/2019), Stan Hickman for a 4 year term to expire 12/2021, and Cason Ogletree for a 4 year term to expire 12/2021. Seconded by Mr. King, the motion carried unanimously

### **Convention & Visitors Bureau**

- Fred Kapadia submitted his resignation from the board effective December 31, 2017
- Mr. King offered a motion to reappoint Alicia Record and Sonny Patel to 4 year terms to expire 12/2021 and to appoint Faysal Kapadia to fill the unexpired term of Fred Kapadia term to expire 12/2020. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously
- Mr. King offered a motion to reappoint Mr. Dodd to the CVB for an annual appointment. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby, the motion carried unanimously

### **Library Board**

- Mr. Lamar Russell does not want to be reappointed to the board

- Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to appoint Mr. Ralph Bass for a 4 year term to expire 12/2021.  
Seconded by Mr. King, the motion carried unanimously

#### **Chamber of Commerce**

- Mr. King offered a motion to reappoint Mr. Melvin Lawrence as the Chamber Advisory Board.  
Seconded by Mr. Goolsby, the motion carried unanimously

#### **Tree Board**

- Mr. Dodd offered a motion to appoint Mr. Bill Waldrep. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby, the motion carried unanimously

#### **Housing Authority**

- Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to appoint Dexter King, Kathy Rowland, Tommy Johnston, Keith Anthony and Wes Cone as additional members on the Housing Authority. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried with four (4) votes for (Dodd, Stroud, Goolsby, and Lawrence) and one (1) abstention (King)

#### **2018 CDBG APPLICATION**

Mrs. Hall reviewed flow test on hydrants in Blount Street area and recommended to council that we submit a 2018 CDBG for Blount Street and stress in the reapplication of this area that water flow is the main issue. Council agreed.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – NEW BUSINESSES COMING & WANTED**

- Discussed need for entertainment as DOC, GPSTC, etc. go to Macon for entertainment
- Demographics are always an issue when trying to recruit but need to look at other areas to emphasize rather than demographics
- Reviewed Main Street events planned for 2018; need council to be involved in events; scheduled Tree Lighting for November 26, 2018
- Reviewed new businesses that opened in 2017
- Blighted properties – need to go back to being proactive; discuss with Michael Norris and Eddie Harris to get input on how to move forward

#### **PHIT AMERICA**

Mayor Wilson reviewed how he found the program. Mayor Wilson stated that we could involve local entities for weigh-ins (hospital, health department), FitCo for exercise; culmination of challenge could be a 5K; employee wellness could be a separate challenge. Mayor Wilson reviewed how a board that he sits on provides this benefit to their employees and they have seen lowered insurance premiums and a reduced deductible for the employee. Mr. Stroud suggested expanding on what was done with the

Extension Service couple of years back. Mr. Stroud stated he would like to be included on any committee/discussion.

#### **EDGE PROGRAM WITH ECG**

Mayor Wilson reviewed his involvement in the program and he along with Mrs. Hall reviewed the cost of the program. It was decided that council could not participate at this time due to the cost and the 2018 budget has already been set.

#### **2020 SPLOST PROJECTS FOR REFERENDUM**

Discussed need for capital improvement projects; fire truck and police cars; and renovation of roads. Mrs. Hall pointed out that there is a good article on the GMA website regarding SPLOST and encouraged everyone to read the article before meeting to decide projects for the SPLOST.

#### **SERVICE DELIVERY AGREEMENT WITH MONROE COUNTY**

Mrs. Hall reviewed the information on the Service Delivery Agreement with Monroe County and stated that she cannot recommend council adopting the agreement due to the maps included in the Plan only show current delivery areas for water and sewer with no future growth for the City. Mr. Dodd stated that an accurate map of the city needs to be created. Mayor Wilson appointed an Ad-Hoc SDS Committee – Mr. Dodd, Mr. Stroud, and Mr. Goolsby will serve of that committee. Mayor Wilson asked Mrs. Hall to contact the County Manager and request that the county appoint a committee to work with the city committee.

#### **UTILITY RATES**

- Work with ECG and John Hewitt to review utility rates
- If ECG or Hewitt cannot help with water rates, will work with GRWA to get assistance
- Current water rates are the more consumed the less per gallon; water conservation plan requires the opposite to encourage water conservation
- Need different rates for commercial and industrial
- Need to make sure that electric rates submitted to PSC are all being reported and include the same information

#### **WITHDRAWAL PERMIT REQUIREMENTS AND PLANT NEEDS**

Mrs. Hall reviewed meeting held with Utility Partners and Hofstadter & Associates. Mrs. Hall stated that she would recommend that council schedule a day to tour our water and wastewater facilities and possibly a new facility, then sit down with engineer to review what we need.

### **GEORGIA CITIES WEEK IDEAS**

Mrs. Hall stated that we have previously used this week for a litter pickup program and that Tammie Pierson, Main Street Director would like to do something different this year. If anyone has any ideas please pass them on to either Mrs. Hall or Mrs. Pierson.

### **YOUTH COUNCIL**

Mrs. Hall stated that there are several good sessions this weekend on Youth Councils and encouraged council to attend those if possible.

### **NEW CITY HALL**

Mrs. Hall stated that Clark Nexsen has recommended rezoning the properties recently purchased on Chambers Street to allow for zero setbacks. Mrs. Hall recommended rezoning the properties to Institutional as the surrounding city properties are zoned and request a zero setback on the properties. Council agreed and Mrs. Hall will get the information to P&Z.

### **LAND PURCHASE/SELL/LEASE/DISPOSAL**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to adjourn into executive session for the purpose of land purchase, sell, lease and/or disposal. Seconded by Mr. King the motion carried unanimously and council adjourned into executive session at 1:50 pm.

Mayor Wilson called the meeting back into open session. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Manager