

**Minutes  
Forsyth City Council  
July 1, 2019**

**Call to Order**

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation, & Roll Call**

Mayor Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Howard gave the invocation. Present for the meeting was Mayor Wilson, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Greg Goolsby, Julius Stroud, Chris Hewett, Melvin Lawrence, and John Howard. Also present was City Manager, Janice Hall; City Clerk, Regina Ivie. City Attorney, Bobby Melton was not present for the meeting.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mayor Wilson stated that one item needs to be added to the Agenda. Chief Harris is to speak on the recent theft in the area.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the amended agenda. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes of the June 17, 2019 Council Meeting**

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

**Approval of Road Closure Request for portion of College St. 7/6/19 – Walker Family Reunion**

Ms. Hall stated that a revision was noted indicating a power board has been requested.

Mr. Stroud made a motion to approve the road closure. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Adoption of Proclamation Guidelines as City Policy**

Ms. Hall stated this was provided previously at a separate council meeting. No suggestions, or comments were received. Therefore no revisions to the original draft have been done.

Mr. Hewett made a motion to approve the adoption of proclamation guidelines as City policy. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

**Chief Eddie Harris – Update on recent thefts**

Chief Harris stated that his investigations department is following up on any and all leads regarding the recent vehicle break-ins in the area. He stated that citizens need to lock their vehicles. It's helpful to remove personal items from the vehicles. If anyone sees anything suspicious to please contact the police department.

**Approval of Accounts Payables Invoices \$167,986.75**

Mr. Hewett made a motion to approve the invoices. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

**City Manager's Report**

Ms. Hall offered the following report:

- There has been a lot of questions surrounding license and when a license or permit is required; you will remember several questions came up during the public hearing for the Entertainment District; I have spoken with the Department of Revenue Agent. He is willing to hold a meeting with elected officials

and business owners to answer any questions and clear up any misunderstandings regarding the State law; hopefully we will be able to get this meeting scheduled before the end of July.

- Working on the garbage audit to make sure Advanced Disposal is billing us correctly and we are billing the customers correctly.
- To schedule a couple of work sessions one with Hofstadter to discuss water/sewer plant upgrade projects. And another with Hewitt/Energy Economics consulting to discuss residential/commercial solar requirements.
- Waiting on documents from bond attorney for the 2020 SPLOST bond; the last information that I have stated that they are waiting on the county audit and requested our meeting dates for July.
- Need to schedule the groundbreaking for the dog park; Request for Proposals are due by 5:00 pm on 7/12; 6 months from deed will be July 23. We need to get groundbreaking scheduled prior to that date; deed was filed in February but dated January.

**Mayor Wilson requested the groundbreaking ceremony be scheduled for 5pm July 15<sup>th</sup> before the council meeting.**

- Additional requests are being received from individual property owners on several streets for speed bumps. Working on developing a policy to bring back to council for approval before speed bumps are installed.
- There are 2 vacancies on CVB; the CVB board will review and make recommendations to council for appointments. A hotel and restaurant representative is needed.
- Previously I brought to council's attention that revised Zoning Ordinance Chapter 7 had errors in the boundaries for the Corridor Overlay on Highway 83. Mr. Melton suggested that this go before Planning & Zoning for a recommendation back to council; Planning & Zoning board met last week. They recommend that the Highway 83 North Corridor show as Adams Street to City Limits. Mr. Melton will advertise and this will come before council for consideration at a public hearing.
- An appeal to close the railroad crossing at Indian Springs Drive have been filed with GDOT and Monroe County Superior Court; a stay has been signed so the crossing will remain open while this is under appeal.
- Several people have asked about the increase in the cost for the fireworks this year. Council and citizens have requested a longer and bigger fireworks display. The City has paid \$6000 for at least 4 years and increased this year to \$10,000; this will increase to about a 15 minute show.
- Working with Public Works and Hofstadter to provide specific projects for the T-SPLOST.
- James Glover Stuart Dedication is set for 8/5/19 @ American Legion Hall at 4:30 with light refreshments.
- Recently everyone was provided with short review of a grant submitted 6/30 for African American Heritage brochures, tour and map. This is part of the Tourism Product Development Grant. Their report will interpret stories of Forsyth; grant awards will be announced in September.
- MEAG annual conference is next week.
- Fireworks Wednesday 7/3; food vendors, inflatables and pony rides begins at 5:30 then fireworks at 9:30

#### **City Attorney Report**

Bobby Melton was not in attendance for the meeting.

#### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Wilson had no further business to report.

#### **Council Comments**

Mr. Howard stated the CVB meeting was held last Tuesday. The CVB board had stated to him why a particular candidate, Navid Kapadia was a good fit for the CVB board. He had explained to the board the concerns of the Council that everyone interested should be considered. Kerri Swearingen and Gilda Stanberry stated to Mr. Howard they both want this candidate to fill the vacancy. Mr. Howard further stated it was the consensus of the

board. It's based on his accomplishments. He's been working in the hospitality industry for 10 years. He manages the Comfort Suites, Comfort Inn, and La Quinta. He's a lifetime AAHOA member, and a certified hotel manager.

Mr. Lawrence stated the speed breakers that have been completed so far we needed. However, The City needs guidelines for the speed breakers going forward.

Mr. Stroud stated that at 513 W. Main Street that the yard debris is not being picked up as it should be.

Mr. Hewett requested an update from Ms. Hall regarding the new City Hall building and the construction at the Zaxby's location. Mr. Hewett further stated that the area behind inventory needs to be addressed, requested a privacy fence installed.

Ms. Hall stated that she spoke with the architects they are still working on the asbestos abatement. That has to be put out for bid. The majority of the building is going to need to be abated due to the silver paint covering the building. Ms. Hall further stated Zaxby's is in the process of submitting their plans. They are coming to the 1st Step meeting. The convenience store has decided the car wash not feasible. Plans have been redrawn excluding the car wash.

Mr. Hewett asked for an update on the Valero Project. Ms. Hall stated there were some issues taking out the gas pumps, leaving a very large hole. New pumps were installed.

Ms. Hall addressed the inventory area stating that she's considering moving the employee parking lot by adding gravel and fencing in that area.

Mr. Lawrence stated he was pleased to see former Councilman Jimmy Jones here tonight. He enjoyed the GMA conference this year. While there he took a course in workforce. He has a contest that he will mention at a future meeting. He further stated that the citizen issues that the council receives he usually sends his directly to Janice. She always handles those in a timely fashion.

#### **Public Comment**

Jimmy Jones @ 141 Meadow Drive. He stated he wanted to speak with the community to discuss a neighborhood watch program. He's requesting the use of a building in the near future to conduct the meeting. He would like to get the police and the community involved. These thefts have been going on for 7 to 8 months. He expressed concern about the recent escalation during the most recent theft event.

Dawn Williams @ 25 Morningside Drive. Ms. Williams asked what else can we as homeowners do to help the police or so that we don't get targeted, and for our safety?

Chief Harris stated that the use of security lights is helpful. Be sure to lock your car doors. Call the police department if you see any suspicious person in the area. If they have hoodies on, wearing dark clothes that person may be up to no good. Give the police a good description of what you see in your area if something seems suspicious.

Residents should call 993-1005 (this number is manned only Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 911.

Jennie Barfield @ 87 Hillsdale Rd. Ms. Garfield stated she's lived there for over 2 years. The thefts have been going on for over 2 years. She locks her door, she doesn't keep anything important in her car. Last night she forgot to lock her door. A police officer informed her at 1 a.m. that her car was broken into. She asked if there are certain vehicles being targeted, are the people of foot?

Chief Harris stated that it's best to call the police if you see someone just riding through the area that doesn't live nearby. Give a good description of the car. Always lock your doors.

#### **Executive Session**

Mr. Stroud requested the Council adjourn into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

Mr. Hewett made a motion to adjourn into executive session at 6:59 p. m. to discuss a personnel matter. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wilson called the meeting back into open session at 7:08 p.m.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to discuss Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.