

MINUTES

FORSYTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

NOVEMBER 4, 2019

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

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Stroud offered the invocation. Present for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Council members Mike Dodd, Julius Stroud, Greg Goolsby, John Howard, Chris Hewett, and Melvin Lawrence. Mr. Lawrence arrived at 6:10 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Wilson requested that the agenda be amended to include a presentation from the Regional Commission on Annexation.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Mr. Hewett, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 21, 2019 WORK SESSION AND COUNCIL MEETING

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

INTRODUCTION OF NEW POLICE OFFICERS – CHIEF EDDIE HARRIS

Chief Harris introduced new hires Cody Maples, Mark Merriman, and Manuel Barajas all certified with years of service with other agencies.

PUBLIC HEARING – RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE ATHENS HOUSING AUTHORITY – FORSYTH GARDEN APARTMENTS

Mr. Melton introduced Mr. Jamie Garner, Butler Snow LLP bond counsel for the Athens Housing Authority Projects. Mr. Garner stated that the public hearing is to allow for the issuance of bonds to allow for acquisition and renovations to Forsyth Garden Apartments; Athens Housing Authority will issue the bond and include Forsyth Garden Apartments in the portfolio; and bonding for acquisition and renovations will be approximately \$62,000 per unit. Mayor Wilson stated that this project is similar to the one currently underway at Piedmont Apartments and there is no obligation or responsibility on the City's part. Mr. Garner agreed and stated this must be approved in cities that have Housing Authorities.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing for comments for or against the approval of the Resolution authorizing the bond issuance. Hearing no comments for or against, Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the Resolution with the Athens Housing Authority as presented and the motion was seconded by Mr. Stroud

Mr. Stroud asked Mr. Garner to review work that would be performed other than the renovations of the buildings and Mr. Garner reviewed that the sidewalks, landscaping, playground, and all areas outside the buildings would be upgraded in addition to the building upgrades. Mr. Dodd asked how many units and Mr. Garner stated there are 78 units with approximately \$62,000 per unit to be invested for a bond of this project at approximately \$11 million. The motion carried unanimously.

TOURISM VIDEO AND CVB UPDATE – GILDA STANBERY, CVB DIRECTOR

Due to technical difficulties, Ms. Stanbery could not present the Tourism video at this time and the video and CVB update were moved to later on the agenda.

CDBG GRANT DOCUMENTS

a. ADOPTION OF LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

Mr. Greg Boike, Middle Georgia Regional Commission, reviewed that the Language Access Plan is a DCA requirement for the Grant and is to provide reasonable language access to those whose language is other than English. Mr. Boike stated that Forsyth's demographics does not require translations in advance, only if they are requested.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to adopt the Language Access Plan for the CDBG for Blount Street water lines as presented by the Regional Commission. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously.

b. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH MIDDLE GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Mr. Boike reviewed that 6% of the Grant amount is allocated for administration of the Grant and the Middle Georgia Regional Commission will administer the Grant for the City. This amount will be funded by the Grant.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement with Middle Georgia Regional Commission for administration of the CDBG as presented by the Regional Commission. Seconded by Mr. Hewett, the motion carried unanimously.

c. APPROVE AGREEMENT WITH HOFSTADTER & ASSOCIATES

Mr. Boike reviewed that this agreement is with Hofstadter & Associates for engineering services for the Grant. Total engineering cost is \$50,650 with the majority of the cost being funded by the Grant.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the Agreement with Hofstadter & Associates for engineering services for CDBG as presented by the Regional Commission. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

ANNEXATION REVIEW – GREG BOIKE AND HOLLY WHARTON, MIDDLE GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Mr. Boike reviewed previous discussions with city council regarding the intent to move forward with annexations and that the areas surrounding the city limits was divided into four phases with the first phase being the Bibb Mill Village area but that was put on hold when Monroe County submitted a request to annex two county owned properties (the recreation complex and Justice Center). Ms. Wharton reviewed areas to be included in each of the four phases. Mr. Boike reviewed that to annex the city must receive approval from 60% of the registered voters in the proposed area and 60% of the land owners in the proposed area.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to move forward with the annexation of phase one and Mr. Hewett seconded the motion. Mr. Howard stated that we need to determine advantages of being in the City as he had someone tell him today that they were moving out of the city because they were tired of being taxed twice for the same property. Mr. Dodd asked Mr. Boike if he could speak on double taxation and reason for property owners to annex. Mr. Boike stated that one reason for annexation is that city water customers inside the city limits receive a lower per gallon rate for their water and sewer. Mr. Boike stated that as to taxation other cities handle this is a variety of ways and tie to services provided, annexation should create a new distribution of sales and LOST tax revenues that are based on population. Mr. Boike stated that some cities have Special Taxation Districts for annexed areas. The motion carried unanimously.

RATE REVIEW – MIKE LEVERETT

Mr. Mike Leverett, city utility engineer, stated that he and Mr. John Hewitt came before council couple months back to review the City's current Distributed Generation Policy which includes solar power. Mr. Leverett reviewed that the City currently has one solar customer that more than satisfies the State requirement for solar power on our system. Mr. Leverett reviewed that the analysis being provided tonight covers two main objections, 1) to provide for additional solar power on our system, and 2) make sure that other City customers are not harmed with the addition of solar on the system. Mr. Leverett reviewed that other City customer could be harmed if fixed cost is lost on solar power customers and all other City customers would have to make up that loss. Mr. Leverett reviewed a handout that provided a rough estimate of impact on City based on 4-year estimate from another source for solar power and MEAG data. Mr. Leverett recommended that City adopt a Rate Schedule/Rider that 1) sets a capacity charge for fixed cost at \$5.65 per month for each small commercial or residential customer and 2) provides a credit of .037¢ per kWh for solar that comes back to the City electric system. Mr. Leverett stated that this

Rider is only for small, non-demand commercial and residential customers, any larger customer would need to be handled on a case-by-case basis. Mayor Wilson asked if other City electric providers charge the Rider and Mr. Leverett stated that he is not aware of any that do not charge the Rider and further stated that if the City does not charge the Rider, the other customers would have to cover that fixed cost. Mr. Dodd asked if the city already has a solar customer and if it is charged the same way. Mr. Leverett stated that the City has one large commercial customer that also has solar power and they are handled separately, with the load and solar being manually calculated based on hourly consumption. Mayor Wilson stated that to clarify this is for city electric customers that wish to have solar and city electric; if a customer wants to completely remove from city power and have solar power only, this would not apply to them. Mr. Hewett asked when we should look at a commercial level and Mr. Leverett stated at approximately 25-50 kW. Mayor Wilson stated that a city customer was told by a solar company that they would save \$5,000 per year if they installed solar. Mr. Leverett stated that he did not see how that would be possible.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the Solar Rate Schedule/Rider not to exceed 10 kW as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Hall stated that we currently work under a motion by council that states we will only allow the amount of solar required by the State and Mr. Melton stated this should be rescinded. Mr. Stroud offered a motion to rescind the motion currently in place capping the solar allowed on our system at the State requirement. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – AMEND ARTICLE II FORSYTH PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Mr. Melton reviewed that these amendments come to council from the Planning & Zoning Commission; has been properly advertised in the October 23 and 30 issues of the Reporter and is before council tonight for consideration. Ms. Hall reviewed the changes being proposed to the ordinance which includes amending the requirement that board members must live in the City to allow board members to live in Monroe County if they are tax payers in the City, adding that members may be removed if they have 3 unexcused absences from meetings and adding the Design & Review duties since those two boards have now been combined.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing for comments for or against the adoption of the amendments to the Administration Ordinance for Planning & Zoning. Hearing no comments, Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Howard offered a motion to approve the amendments to Article II, Forsyth Planning & Zoning Commission as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd, the motion carried unanimously.

TOURISM VIDEO AND CVB UPDATE – GILDA STANBERY, CVB DIRECTOR

Ms. Gilda Stanbery, CVB Director, presented the Tourism video to council stating that this video will be available to the City, County, Board of Education, and any others to use as promotional information and on their respective websites.

M. Stanbery also reviewed first Tourism Expo to be held on November 7, 2019 beginning at 9:00 am at the La Quinta hotel.

Ms. Stanbery reviewed the tourism numbers for the State and Monroe County/Forsyth stating that our local numbers continue to increase.

APPROVE TEMPORARY LEASE AGREEMENT WITH AMY KNIGHT FOR CITY HALL ANNEX

Ms. Hall reviewed the temporary lease stating that the building Mrs. Amy Knight was leasing requires immediate roof removal and replacement causing her to have to quickly move her business out of that location. Ms. Hall stated that the agreement before council for approval tonight is modeled after the one the City currently has in place with the CVB and that has been presented to the Artisan Guild for approval.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the temporary least Agreement with Amy Knight for a portion of the City Hall Annex as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously.

AWARD BID FOR AUDITING SERVICES FOR 2019 AUDIT

Ms. Hall reviewed the four responses received for the RFP for Auditor services stating that she, Regina Ivie and Charles Grinstead independently reviewed the responses and agreed that Mauldin & Jenkins was the best responder. Ms. Hall recommended that Council award the bid for Auditing services for the 2019 audit to Mauldin & Jenkins.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to award the 2019 auditing services to Mauldin & Jenkins as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE “KEY TO THE CITY” POLICY

Ms. Hall reviewed that council previously requested a policy on providing a “Key To The City” and presented a draft of a policy that is similar to the one recently written for Proclamations. To provide for discussion, Mr. Stroud offered a motion to adopt the policy presented and Mr. Lawrence seconded the motion. Mr. Stroud stated that there should be a limit to the number of Key To The City provided each year and that those should be for acts of heroism and bravery. After a lengthy discussion regarding the parameters to qualify to receive a Key To The City, removing council for the review process and establishing a citizen review committee, need to look at the act and not at the person performing the act, Mr. Stroud

rescinded his motion. Mayor Wilson stated that an alternative could be that each council member nominated a person to receive a Key To The City each year. Mr. Howard offered a motion to table the matter until additional review is made. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Stroud stated that the policy could be part of the council retreat in January.

APPROVAL OF CHRISTMAS BONUS FOR CITY EMPLOYEES

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the Christmas bonuses for city and Mr. Hewett seconded the motion. Ms. Hall reviewed the amounts previously provided by council as follows:

Fulltime employees with more than 1 year of service would receive a check for \$300

Fulltime employees with less than 1 year of service would receive a check for \$150

All part time employees would receive a check for \$100

Ms. Hall stated that the gross amount of each check is more to include the Social Security taxes so that the employee receives a check in the amounts stated. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE EMPLOYEE INSURANCE RENEWALS

Ms. Hall stated that all current insurance carriers for employee benefits have submitted a flat renewal for 2020. Ms. Hall reviewed the additional option for family coverage but stated that Anthem only allows for three options so a change would be required if offering the \$3500 deductible plan. Ms. Hall also reviewed that the City currently contributes a small amount toward dependent coverage which equates to the difference between the employee premium amount for the higher deductible plan and the \$500 deductible plan that the city pays 99%.

Mr. Howard offered a motion to approve the employee benefit renewals with the same coverage and same carriers as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLES INVOICES \$253,819.35

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the accounts payable invoices as presented. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF REQUISITIONS GREATER THAN \$5,000

- a. Phoenix Metal Roofing - \$5,500 replace roof on pavilions at Country Club Park**
- b. Art Threats Inspections - \$7,280 remove & replace mulch in Kynette Park playground**

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the requisitions greater than \$5,000 as presented and Mr. Hewett seconded the motion. Ms. Hall reviewed that both of these projects were included in the presentation from TSW on the Park Master Plan; both pavilions have rotten areas and holes in the roofs and the mulch in the playground at Kynette is in bad need of removal and replacement. Ms. Hall stated that these are presented as Special Project funded requisitions. Council agreed that these should be paid as Special Projects. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Hall offered the following report:

- LMIG – getting approval to change roads; looking to change from Country Club at intersection with Ensign/Meadow, golf and park parking lots to Johnston Street from square to intersection with Main Street; will need approximately ½ mile additional if we use 2018 & 2019 LMIG funds so would like to add Phelps Street from Main to King Street; also preparing streets for your approval to submit for 2020
- MEAG had requested opinion from participants regarding opting out of Operating Agreement for Wansley Units 1 & 2; requested John Hewitt & Mike Leverett look at this and they recommended not engaging opt out for 10/31/19 but this needs to be reviewed and analyzed; I submitted letter to MEAG stating that we do not want MEAG to exercise opt out for 2019 and requested that MEAG initiate analysis by EOY 2019 with analysis complete by 8/2020 to allow all participants the opportunity to review the analysis and make sound decision based on facts
- Reservoir is full; Drought Level 2 Response will remain in effect until 12/31/2019 due to complexity of amending; we will lessen our efforts of enforcement unless conditions at the reservoir warrant strict enforcement; we will remain on odd/even watering schedule; huge thank you to Forsyth water customers as demand is down to 1.25 mgd
- Hometown Connection November 12 noon-2; GDOT representatives will be here to review Commercial Vehicle Lane Project; state and federal delegations will be represented as well; encourage all to attend; GDOT has stated they do not have exact location of the lanes or any impacts on properties but will review the information that they have
- Pay Plan should be complete before next council meeting; would like a work session for budget and Pay Plan review prior to next council meeting if possible; November 18 at 5:00 pm; Correction to articles in last week's newspaper, council did not vote on the budget and the information presented, as always, did not include raises for employees but it was discussed that salary increases would be presented to council at the next budget review and those would either include the Pay Plan, across the board raises, or a combination of both for council to consider and the amount for the across the board increase was presented; also the budget report that was sent to council early October was to make

sure that the budget was presented 90 days before it goes into effect as stated in the City Charter – the budget was not approved at the work session or council meeting and will go into effect until adopted by council which should be on or before the last meeting in December

- Revised Park Master Plan was sent out to council last week; preparing presentation to provide projects paid for from Special Projects and total amount available at this time for projects; the implementation schedule from TSW is their suggestion, we can implement in any schedule that we want and the pricing is based on information available to them and is not from any quotes obtained
- Notice To Proceed was provided to TriStar today at precon meeting; fencing may go up by end of this week; mobilize possibly on 11/14 but no later than 11/18, asbestos removal then expect demo of building to begin by 11/22; will close portions of Chambers and Kimball as needed during demolition and United Bank has been advised of this and are in agreement so long as exit to their parking lot remains open
- CDBG public hearing being advertised for November 15 at 9:00 am in Aldermen Hall

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Melton had nothing further to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Wilson reminded everyone that tomorrow is Election Day and all city residents will vote at the Monroe County Recreation Complex.

Mayor Wilson stated that the sign for Julius Stroud, Jr. Lane has been delivered and a date needs to be set for a ceremony to install the sign.

Mayor Wilson reviewed that he will be attending the Regional Commission conference this week and then the Mayors Summit this weekend.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Stroud stated that the police department needs to look at another way to block the street at City Hall/Police Department in the afternoons as during the time that the street is blocked you cannot get to or from the parking lot.

Mr. Howard stated that he has enjoyed serving with council and hopeful that the outcome of the election tomorrow allows his to continue to serve.

Mr. Goolsby stated that he was asked why city elections are held on off years rather than during State and Federal elections. Mr. Melton stated that this is State law that requires city elections to be held in odd years and is part of the Election Code for the State of Georgia.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he has several people that need replacement garbage cans and will call Ms. Hall tomorrow with the list.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one came forward for public comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

An executive session was not held.

ADJOURN

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn at 8:07 pm. Seconded by Mr. Howard, the motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Janice L. Hall, City Manager