

**Minutes**  
**Forsyth City Council Meeting**  
**March 2, 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. Lawrence gave the invocation. Present for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson; Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Julius Stroud, Greg Goolsby, John Howard, Chris Hewett, and Melvin Lawrence. Also present was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Manager, Janice Hall; and City Clerk, Regina Ivie.

**Approval of the Agenda**

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

**Approval of the Minutes from the February 17, 2020 Council Meeting**

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

**Approval of temporary alcohol permit for Her Majesty, LLC. on March 13 – March 15, 2020**

Ms. Hall stated Ms. Ogletree's business Her Majesty LLC is now in the location formerly known as Forsyth County Cooking. She's requesting a temporary alcohol permit during the Forsythia Festival. Ms. Ogletree stated Her Majesty LLC. intends to open for regular business hours early September. For the Forsythia Festival she plans to host a New Orleans style event with alcoholic drinks to be served along with New Orleans style food.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the temporary alcohol permit. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of temporary alcohol permit for Beer Wenches on May 2, June 6, August 1, September 5, and October 3, 2020**

Ms. Hall stated the dates listed on the permit request coincide with the City's Night Market events. The applicant has been made aware that Council had approved to host the Night Market series without an alcohol vendor as to not to interfere with businesses that have permanent alcohol licenses.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the permit. Seconded by Mr. Dodd.

Mr. Hewett inquired as to where Beer Wenches plan to set up to sell the alcoholic beverages. Ms. Hall stated they plan to set up near the food trucks. An alcohol license is required by the State; only after a temporary permit is issued by the City. Mr. Howard stated that previously Council had voted to not have any alcohol vendors during the events since the City has different restaurants such as Jonah's, Pickled Okra; and at these events most people bring their own beverages. Mr. Goolsby agreed. Mr. Howard further stated we wanted to keep the alcohol business to the current businesses within the entertainment district. Mayor Wilson stated the LLC is a local vendor. Ms. Hall stated the applicants are Christie Lambert & Holly White. Mr. Goolsby inquired about the State's fee compared to the City's fee for an alcohol license. Ms. Hall stated the State charges \$25.00, City charges \$100.00. Mr. Stroud withdrew his motion. Mr. Goolsby stated it's unfair to the local businesses to who pay \$2000 to allow someone to sell alcohol for \$125.00. Mr. Stroud withdrew his motion.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to decline the request for the alcohol permit. Seconded Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with five votes (Goolsby, Stroud, Howard, Hewett, Dodd). Mr. Lawrence voted in opposition.

**Approval of Distributed Generation Rider**

Ms. Hall stated the distributed generation rider schedule will be included in the City's rate book was written by Mike Leverette. A business within the City has requested to install solar; a 20 kilowatt system. Per Mr. Leverette said the difference is minimal, the business will be non-demand. The capacity charge per kilowatt of installed capacity

is \$5.65 and excess energy buy back is \$.037 per kilowatt of excess energy. These rates were discussed with the business owner.

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

#### **Approval of fee schedule for beer brewery**

Ms. Hall stated we have a company opening soon that will have a brewery. Currently the City does not have a bond amount or an annual fee amount set for a brewery.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to set the brewery bond amount to \$1000 and the annual fee to \$400. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Approval of special rental request of City Hall Annex**

Ms. Hall stated Ms. Vaughn would like to conduct a senior yoga class at City Hall annex at a reduced hourly charge. Ms. Vaughn stated no set up is necessary for the class; she charges a minimal amount to her customers for the class.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the rental request at a rate of \$20.00 for 3 hours. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with five votes (Goolsby, Dodd, Hewett, Stroud, Howard). Mr. Lawrence had stepped away from the meeting temporarily during the vote.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to take a brief recess to allow Mr. Lawrence time to rejoin the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with five votes (Goolsby, Dodd, Hewett, Stroud, Howard). At 6:27 p.m. Mr. Hewett offered a motion to return to an open meeting from recess. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Approval to advertise for extension of Downtown Entertainment District**

Ms. Hall stated the boundaries are one block off the square currently. The extension requested during the Council retreat is for Johnston Street from Kimbell Street down to Adams Street; and to allow citizens to purchase alcohol from the restaurants at the square with the cups it needs to be extended from Adams to King Street.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the advertisement to extend the downtown entertainment district. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Approval of Georgia Municipal Training for June 2020 for Mayor & Council**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the Georgia Municipal Training for Mayor & Council. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Electric Cities of Georgia Special Election Ballot**

Ms. Hall stated recommendations are needed so that Mayor Wilson may cast his vote on the ballot. Or allow him to use his own discretion when he cast his vote.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to allow Mayor Wilson to use his own discretion when voting. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

#### **City Manager's Report**

Ms. Hall provided the following report:

- Highway 41/West Main Street patching was started on Wednesday and completed on Friday. We did add 2 bad spots east of MLK to the patching. I will know more after my meeting with GDOT regarding the full resurface of that roadway but we only patched the bad spots that were causing issues for home owners.
- Repairs to roof of City Hall Annex have been completed.
- Repairs to columns at entrance to Newton Drive have been completed.
- Sophicity new IT company came in this morning to install their software on all city computers, they expect to be here through at least Wednesday but will depend on how much they actually get done or how slowed down they get due to our hardware. Once they have that completed, they will be able to provide a report showing all hardware, what computer all is connected to, and age of hardware and software on each computer.

- Insurance company has deemed our vehicle a total loss from accident Major Foster had on Johnston Street; valued vehicle at less than \$3,000. Submitting paperwork and title to insurance company to have vehicle removed.
- Hello Yellow/Food Truck Frenzy was a huge success this past Saturday in spite of the cool temperature and winds. Forsythia Festival events will begin Friday March 13 and run through Sunday March 15. Council approved additional early street closures for this year's event to allow us to move the stage from Main/Jackson to Lee/Johnston in front of Ham & Jenkins office.
  - Forsyth's Greatest Night; Hollywood Hoedown, March 7 at 7:30
    - Several events beginning March 12 with arts & crafts on March 14 & 15
- Main Street events:
  - Kite Day, April 11
  - Farmers Market begins in May
  - Night Market agreed to the change to the agreement to not have an alcohol vendor for the Night Market events. They have the Forsyth Night Market website ready to go just waiting on some advertisement pictures before launching the site. This will be 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month from 5-10pm except July
- Schneider presented an updated plan to the department heads last week. They are ready to present to council and we would like to do this at a work session if possible with the department heads attending.
- Have had a couple of 501(c)3 contact me asking how to go about getting a banner on one or more of the city utility poles. I reviewed this with the electric department as they would be the ones the poles would affect, and they do not see a problem with designating a couple of poles as non-profit advertisement poles. I will write a policy and bring that back before council for approval along with a recommendation for a fee.
- Planning & Zoning met last week and had several items on their agenda:
  - Variance request from QuikTrip for location of gas pumps and for lighting; this was recommended for approval and will come to council for a public hearing after advertisement
  - Variance request from Johnny Brown for detail and future use for automated car wash in TND behind Lil Store
  - Town Creek Center presented their plan to Design & Review and this was approved. I have provided copies of the exterior elevations for your information.
  - P&Z Board discussed need to clarify the parking space width and recommended advertising that all spaces should be 10' and anything less should require a variance.
  - I presented map of properties located on MLK that are currently TND. I had received a request from a property owner to rezone all of those from TND to HB but I recommended to P&Z that maybe the business types that are not allowed in TND needs to be reviewed for potential changes.
- Georgia Municipal Association Registration must be turned in no later than Friday for to get everyone registered for their training.
- I will be meeting with Georgia Department Of Transportation next week to review all of the outstanding/overlooked issues that we have; signage on square, yield sign at entrance ramp, speed of vehicles coming into city, if you have anything specific that you would like me to address please call or email me.
- City is part of the Monroe County Emergency Operations Plan which deals with roles of each entity in the event of an emergency whether it be a weather emergency or health emergency. City, County, BOE, hospital and health department held meeting on Friday just to discuss what we are doing currently to help keep the spread of flu viruses down.
- Received request from group that is doing fundraiser for people affected by water issue in Juliette to use the city stage. I am not sure that it is road-worthy enough and will check with Steve when he returns from illness but if so, need council's approval to loan or rent the stage to them for their event. This is a unique situation but I do want to caution that this will open us up for more people wanting to use the stage.
 

*Mr. Hewett offered a motion to allow the stage to be borrowed with liability insurance to be provided by the fundraising group. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.*
- Sent out an email this afternoon regarding the financing options for the new city hall building. USDA is taking much longer than originally reviewed and we have good quotes from other lenders. USDA may not be complete by end of the year. Spoke with Alston & Bird and GMA today, we can move forward with the program in place at Georgia

Municipal Association and not have the additional approval processes that Bobby thought we would have to have. We will need to execute a Reimbursement Agreement so that we can get tax-exempt financing for those cost. The process through Georgia Municipal Association will take 1-2 months to finalize depending on any issues they encounter.

#### **City Attorney Report**

Mr. Melton inquired about the City Attorney session during Georgia Municipal Association training. Ms. Hall stated the session is Saturday at noon. The ad for the hotel motel tax increase has been done. Legislature should be providing an update soon. The Fox City Brewing application is being advertised the two next weeks. It will be presented to Council on March 16, 2020.

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

Mayor Wilson congratulated Mr. Lawrence for being selected as Chairman for the Committee on Aging for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission. Mayor Wilson further stated he, Ms. Hall and Chairman Tapley attended a meeting last month with Georgia Department of Transportation Commissioner, and legislative delegation. We spoke about the commercial vehicle lanes. The plans are still being worked on. It was mentioned to have public meetings this summer. The plans seems to be much less impactful; utilize the right of way as much as possible and not have to move to the right as much as originally stated. Overall I felt better that our concerns were being heard. Currently the construction date to begin is 2024 with a completion date of 2028. I attended two meetings on Friday related to the Coronavirus. There are similarities with the flu and the coronavirus. We all need to practice good hand hygiene, stay away from people while we are sick. Testing for the coronavirus is being done to track the spread of it. We do have an emergency operations plan for the City. We, the Board of Education, and the Health Department are continuing to monitor the situation closely. Welcome and Thank you to the Leadership Monroe group for attending the meeting tonight.

#### **Council Board Reports**

Mr. Howard stated Convention & Visitors Bureau met this morning at 9:00 a.m. Staffing issues are being worked on diligently. A rack card was distributed to Council members. We are working on putting Forsyth on the map. The card has been distributed to various places in the State of Georgia. The Convention & Visitors Bureau has an ad in the Southern Living Magazine.

Mr. Hewett stated the Housing Authority will meet Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. at City Hall Annex in the vestibule area.

Mr. Lawrence expressed excitement over being selected as Chairman. The committee covers eleven (11) counties. He's most appreciative of being nominated and selected as Chairman.

#### **Additional Business**

Ms. Hall stated plans for the New City Hall building are available for review.

#### **Public Comments**

No one came forward for public comments.

#### **Executive Session**

No executive session was held.

#### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to discuss Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.