

Minutes
Forsyth City Council Meeting
May 18, 2020

Call to Order

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

Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation and Roll Call

Mayor Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Stroud gave the invocation. Present for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Chris Hewett, Greg Goolsby; City Manager, Janice Hall and City Attorney, Bobby Melton. Councilmembers Melvin Lawrence, Julius Stroud and Mayor Pro-Tem John Howard attended the meeting by video conferencing. Also in attendance for the meeting by conference call was City Clerk, Regina Ivie.

All members of Council were in attendance for the meeting therefore all unanimous votes will be six (6) (Howard, Lawrence, Hewett, Stroud, Goolsby and Dodd). Mr. Goolsby arrived at the meeting at 6:30 p. m.; prior to arriving at the meeting he was in attendance by conference call.

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 May 4, 2020 Council Meeting

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

Public Hearing - Zoning variance application of Johnnie Brown at 111 Culloden Rd (MLK Jr. Drive)

Mr. Melton stated a zoning variance has been requested for the property that has an existing car wash on site. The property is currently zoned R-3. It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on April 29, May 6, and May 13, 2020. Approval has been recommended by Planning & Zoning at their April 24, 2020 meeting. Ms. Pierson stated an existing car wash had been operating at the address. A variance is needed since it's currently zoned R3 residential.

Mayor Wilson called the public hearing to order and opened the floor for or against the proposed variance. Mayor Wilson asked if anyone was in attendance to speak for or against the proposed variance. Mr. Johnnie Brown addressed Council. He promised to beautify the property and to keep it beautified; wants the location to look good for the neighborhood. He further stated he's building a good report with the residents and the police department. Hearing no further comments for or against the matter Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

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

Public Hearing – Application for alcohol beverage license for Anokhi Retail Inc. dba Monroe Food Mart at 111 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive

Mr. Melton stated the application is for the sale of alcoholic beverages (beer-package and wine package). It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on April 8, April 15, April 22, and April 29, 2020.

Mayor Wilson called the public hearing to order and opened the floor for or against the application. Mayor Wilson asked if anyone was in attendance to speak for or against the application for alcohol beverage license. There being no further comments from the public Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the application. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with four (4) votes (Lawrence, Hewett, Goolsby and Dodd). Mr. Howard and Mr. Stroud voted against the motion.

Public Hearing – Application for alcohol beverage license for Anmol Retail Inc. dba Express Food Mart at 270 N. Lee Street

Mr. Melton stated the application is for the sale of alcoholic beverages (beer-package and wine package). It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on April 8, April 15, April 22, and April 29, 2020.

Mayor Wilson called the public hearing to order and opened the floor for or against the application. Mayor Wilson asked if anyone was in attendance to speak for or against the application for alcohol beverage license. There being no comments from the public Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Howard offered a motion to approve the application. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing – Proposed ordinance to Amending Article VIII Downtown Entertainment District of Chapter 4 of the City Code; to provide an amendment to the area defining the Forsyth Downtown Entertainment District (Section 4-602)

Mr. Melton stated the proposed ordinance was mentioned at the March 16, 2020 Council Meeting; to move forward with expanding and defining the Downtown Entertainment District. It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on April 29, May 6, and May 13, 2020.

Mayor Wilson called the public hearing to order and opened the floor for or against the ordinance. Mayor Wilson asked if anyone was in attendance to speak for or against the ordinance to come forward. There being no comments from the public Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

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

Public Hearing - Proposed ordinance to amend Article 22 of the zoning ordinance and code; to provide for standard parking space widths by amending Section 22.11 and Table 22.1

Mr. Melton stated ordinance has been recommended by Planning & Zoning at the April 24, 2020 meeting. It would update the width of the parking stalls to 20' length and 10' width for all parking spaces. It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on April 1, April 8, April 15, April 29, May 6, and May 13, 2020.

Mr. Stroud requested clarification as to who completed a study to determine necessary widths of the spaces. Ms. Pierson stated Planning & Zoning did not complete a study but recommended changing all to 10 feet based on discussion surrounding wider vehicles and the need to remove 9' width. Mr. Dodd asked if this was to make all parking spaces uniform in size? To that Ms. Pierson stated that's correct.

Mayor Wilson called the public hearing to order and opened the floor for or against the proposed ordinance. Mayor Wilson asked if anyone was in attendance to speak for or against the ordinance to come forward. There being no comments from the public Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the ordinance as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud. After further discussion Mr. Hewett withdrew his motion.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to table until further study has been completed. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of resolution for a grant to renovate Forsyth Golf Course

Greg Boike and Dean Nelson with the Regional Commission attended the meeting by video conferencing. Mr. Boike stated that the City has been awarded a \$50,000 improvement grant to renovate the Forsyth Golf Course from the Department of Natural Resources. Per the agreement the total cost of the project would be \$100,000; grant would fund 50% of the cost and the City would cover the remaining 50%. No start date has been determined but the project period ends and must be completed by December 31, 2022. Currently we are working on an agreement with the Golf Course; it will be brought back before council at a later date.

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

Appointment of voting delegate for Georgia Municipal Association

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to appoint Melvin Lawrence as the continued voting delegate. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of designated parking space for curbside pickup – Laurie Thomas; Jonah's on Johnston

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to grant 2 parking spaces for restaurants and one pharmacy downtown during business hours only for curbside pickup for the remainder of the year 2020; applicants would apply for a permit at City Hall at no cost. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of new zoning district for agriculture

Mr. Melton reviewed proposal to amend zoning code to create an agricultural district. This is the first reading; to be advertised and brought before council on June 15, 2020. This proposal would mimic the County's agricultural zoning district; Planning and Zoning will review and return any changes recommended. The district would not include any slaughterhouses but traditional agricultural and some conventional businesses would be included such as convenience stores, barber shops, dry cleaners, bed and breakfasts.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to begin the process to create a new zoning district. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Requisitions Greater than \$5,000

Georgia Hydrant - \$12,000

(Davis Plumbing to Reimburse City ½ of the expense)

Calibration Controls Automation - \$6,309.95

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

City Manager's Report

Ms. Hall provided the following report to Council:

- Main Street and Night Market would like direction from council as to how to move forward with events. Night Market has cancelled all events until the Fall and have asked if we would like for them to start planning for the 9/5 and 10/3 events. Main Street needs to know how to plan for fireworks – other cities are doing various things with their fireworks – some are continuing as planned; some have cancelled, and some have moved fireworks to Labor Day. We are requesting council's input as to how to move forward. If we decide to hold fireworks. We still need to get approval from County Commissioners to shoot them at the Recreation Dept.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to cancel the scheduled fireworks event in July. Seconded by Mr. Howard; the motion carried unanimously.

- Mary Person High School will hold a reverse parade for the seniors this Friday beginning at 6:00 pm. Cars will begin from Montpelier Road with right turns only into the campus so you must come from Thornton Road, up Montpelier Road to campus, turn right into campus and wind through the BOE property ending at Brooklyn Ave where right turns only will be allowed. This directional flow will keep traffic backups out of downtown. Seniors will stand behind their sign pictures and after the parade, we will pick those up and place them downtown. BOE and Rose Theatre have a video running of all senior pictures as well.
- Welcome Center lobby floors are finished, and doors have been delivered and should be installed this week or next depending on Brian's schedule.
- Planning & Zoning will meet tomorrow at 5:00 pm at City Hall Annex to review a backlog of requests. 1st Step will meet tomorrow morning to review a couple of projects before they go to Planning & Zoning.
- Electric Cities of Georgia annual subscription is ready for renewal. Cost decreased by \$12,798 with most of that decrease being due to cancelling our participation in joint purchasing. 2019/20 \$108,676 and 2020/21 \$95,878
- We closed last Friday on financing for City Hall building. Today received first draw request from Pellicano and need to know if council is ok with paying those as they come in monthly. The draw requests are initially sent to Clark Nexsen for their review and approval and then to me for review, approval and payment. The bank account is setup so that we must have two signatures to request funds to be transferred and as always two signatures on checks written. We know the total amount of the construction cost and any change orders will come before council for approval. Additionally, we will be closing off Chambers Street as previously discussed to protect workers as they cross and work. Will also use top parking spaces for container storage for materials.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to allow payments to be processed as presented to Pellicano. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

- You will notice that Georgia Department of Transportation has begun working on some of the items that I have been discussing with them. Drainage and sidewalk at Lee Street railroad crossing on northbound side has been fixed, southbound still needs to be done. No truck signs have been installed at Johnston/Lee and Main/Jackson intersections.

City Attorney Report

Mr. Melton reviewed the Quik Trip annexation matter. Four parcels at the intersection of Patrol Rd and Harold Clarke Parkway have submitted applications for annexation; Charles Floyd (4 acres), Beach Club Partners LLC (1.25 acres), Rahim Kapadia (1.66 acres) and DKC Investments LLC (1.50 acres). Currently, all the properties are zoned Commercial in the County. The applications are asking for highway business zoning; all have been presented to Planning & Zoning. A letter to the County Commission giving notice of the proposed annexation and zoning is to be sent on May 19, 2020. This is the First Reading on the annexation and zoning. It will be advertised in the Monroe Reporter on May 27, June 3, and June 10, 2020. The Public Hearing and Second Reading is set for the June 15, 2020 Council Meeting where at that time it will be for Council's consideration.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Wilson had no further business to report.

Additional Business

Mr. Howard expressed concern regarding Georgia Power and water issues in Juliette; he referenced an article in the Monroe Reporter on April 24, 2020. Mr. Howard read City previously attempted to work with the County to provide water as tax dollars leave county when they buy water from another source. He further stated there has been no consideration from County to talk with the City regarding providing water services. We aren't a One Monroe because we are not working together on projects. We have never been given a seat at the table during discussions especially on water. Mayor Wilson stated the City has the capability and capacity to serve the County; paying other counties for the services enhances their economic development.

Mr. Stroud requested additional patrol for the cemeteries as flowers are being stolen.

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. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the council meeting. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.