

Minutes
Forsyth City Council Meeting
June 1, 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. Dodd gave the invocation. Present for the meeting in person was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Chris Hewett, Mike Dodd; City Manager, Janice Hall; and City Clerk, Regina Ivie. Present for the meeting by conference video call was Councilmembers John Howard, Greg Goolsby, Melvin Lawrence, Julius Stroud and City Attorney, Bobby Melton. All members of Council were present therefore all unanimous votes will be six (6) votes (Lawrence, Dodd, Hewett, Stroud, Howard and Goolsby).

Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Wilson stated an amendment to the agenda was needed for the street closure request from Amanda Allen on July 6, 2020; the correct date for the request is June 6, 2020. Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the agenda with the correction. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes from the May 18, 2020 Council Meeting

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

Approval of street and parking space closure – Wayne Wetendorf with Grits Cafe on June 16 – June 27, 2020

Mr. Wayne Wetendorf with Grits Café requested to close one lane of the street between North Lee and Jackson in front of the restaurant for outside dining; from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., July 16, 2020 to June 27, 2020, Tuesday through Saturday; a total of eleven days. He further stated tables would be placed in the street and sidewalk eight feet apart so that his employees could safely serve the customers.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the street closure request as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett.

Mr. Stroud questioned as to how to protect customers at the restaurant from traveling traffic on the street. Mr. Wetendorf stated he would place caution tape down the street for separation.

Mr. Melton stated the public health emergency is effective until July 12th; the criteria for gatherings is twenty five (25) people present for a single location. The definition of a gathering is more than twenty five (25) people present at a single location; a single location can be defined as a space where all customers gathered cannot maintain six feet of distance between themselves and other people.

Mr. Howard inquired in the event the street closure is approved the City would block the street as per normal process. Ms. Hall stated barriers could be across the street; the café would need to move them daily.

Mayor Wilson asked Mr. Wetendorf if he had spoken with neighboring businesses regarding the street closure request. Mr. Wetendorf stated that he would speak with them; only parking possibly impaired would be the two spaces in front of the pharmacy. He offered to not block off those two spaces.

Chief Harris suggested closing the entire street rather than one lane only due to safety concerns.

Mayor Wilson restated the motion to accept the presentation from Mr. Wetendorf to allow half of the street and parking spaces between Lee and Jackson on West Johnston to be closed from the hours 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Tuesday through Saturday, June 16 to June 27, 2020; motion carried unanimously.

Approval of street closure – Scott Harrell or Hambric Brook on May 31, June 7, June 14, June 21, and June 28, 2020

Reverend Harrell provided precautions that have been taken if allowed to conduct services on the Sunday's requested. Church members would maintain proper social distancing in the street in front of the church, the parking lot and on the steps of the Church with lawn chairs. The Church and restrooms will not be open; no flyers are being distributed currently; online services are being offered. One service for those dates requested; closure time is 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

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

Approval of street closure – Evelene Calloway on July 18, 2020

Ms. Hall stated an annual event street closure will begin at James Street beginning at St. Luke Church to Patrol Rd. Approximately 150 people is expected; electricity will be needed. Applicant is hopeful that all restrictions are lifted by the date of the event.

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

Approval of street closure – Amanda Allen on June 6, 2020

Amanda Allen was not in attendance for the meeting.

Mr. Melton cautioned that the emergency order of social distancing will still be in effect on this date; all precautions need to be observed. Ms. Hall stated the applicant has requested only to use the sidewalks no streets will be closed; social distancing guidelines were discussed during the conversation with Ms. Allen.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the street closure request. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of request of Fox City Brewery to remove and replace City sidewalk on Harris Street.

Mr. Hall stated that Mr. George Emami with Fox City Brewery would like to remove and replace the sidewalk in front of the Brewery that's in need of repair; he will also make the sidewalk ADA compatible with a slope to the sidewalk and to the street.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the request from Fox City Brewery to remove and replace the sidewalk as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of preliminary budget for Electric Cities for fiscal year 2021

Ms. Hall stated to remove services with Electric Cities a two year notice is required; requests for additional services are added immediately. Two years ago Council voted to remove joint purchasing and pole inspection treatment as the City received no benefit. Electric Cities' fiscal year 2021 begins July 2020; the reduced cost after those two services are removed will be \$95,878.00 compared to 2020 at \$108,876; a savings of \$12,998.00. The reduced cost for the City will begin July 2020.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the preliminary budget for Electric Cities for fiscal year 2021. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Georgia Municipal Association Ballot for District 6 Officers for 2020-2021

Ms. Hall stated no additional persons have been proposed for the officers; permission is needed to submit the ballot. Ms. Hall recommended that Mayor Pro-tem John Howard sign and submit the ballot since Mayor Eric Wilson is listed as an officer.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the ballot; and to allow Mayor Pro-tem John Howard to sign the ballot as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval to advertise and First Reading – An ordinance to amend Chapter 4 (Alcoholic Beverages) of the code, to add definitions of “growler” and “micro-brewery”.

Ms. Hall stated this is a First Reading of the possible ordinance change to add definition of “Growler” and “Micro-brewery”. A fee will need to be established. “Growler” means a bottle capable of being sealed for the purpose of complying with open container laws, with a capacity of sixteen to sixty-four fluid ounces, used for purchasing and transporting malt beverages produced by a licensed micro-brewery which also has a package sales license and a consumption on the premises license of the City. Mr. Emami will be opening a micro-brewery. “Micro-brewery” is a facility for the production and packaging of malt beverages for distribution, retail or wholesale, on or off the premises and which has a capacity of no more than 15,000 barrels per year.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the first reading and approval to advertise in the Monroe Reporter. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Melton stated two definitions will be added to the City's code which doesn't exist currently in the City code; growler and micro-brewery. It will allow a “growlers” license. It will come before Council on the June 15, 2020 meeting; it's currently being advertised.

Approval of agreement between City of Forsyth & Golf Board for the LWCF grant expenses and process

Ms. Hall recommended this item be tabled until the next week to allow time for Mr. Melton and herself to review the agreement as it was just received earlier today.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to table until the next meeting. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of payment to Monroe County for E911 agreement for January through June 2020 \$49,750.44

Ms. Hall stated the E911 services for January – June 2020 needs to be paid. The City hasn't received an invoice for this year. Per the agreement a monthly invoice should be received; we have never received a monthly invoice since the intergovernmental agreement was signed. For 2017 the City paid \$99,000 based on the agreement, 2018 \$162,000, 2019 we were invoiced at the end of the year \$211,040.06, the City paid \$99,500. To date the check for 2019 hasn't been cashed. No invoice has been received so based on the intergovernmental agreement I calculated an estimate for 2020 to be \$49,750.44.

Mayor Wilson stated that when the agreement was signed that the City was breaking even at \$99,000. There is dispute regarding the 4th quarter of 2018; the County contends the City hasn't paid for the 2018 fees. Monroe County didn't have the necessary software installed until the 4th quarter of 2018; the City still had our dispatchers till the 4th quarter of 2018. A payment was sent for the 4th quarter of 2018. A payment was made for 2019 based on the 2017 expense until we could get some documentation for the increase. We pay based on a percentage of the total cost of the E911 services for the County; agreed to in the intergovernmental agreement.

Mr. Melton one obligation of the county per the agreement is to provide monthly billing.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to process the payment based on the estimate provided. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion on Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Intergovernmental Agreement

Ms. Hall stated Monroe County has voted to place the T-SPLOST on the November Ballot; the notification to the City has been done. The City needs to determine if we would like to participate in the T-SPLOST. If the City decides not to move forward with the T-SPLOST the City residents would still be taxed however; the City wouldn't benefit from the levy of the T-SPLOST. The tax would be for five years with an estimated \$17 million; the City's share would be \$2.5 million. The County is hosting a required joint meeting on June 19, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. at the County Conference Center. A quorum is needed that day to vote on the intergovernmental agreement with the County.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to proceed with the T-SPLOST intergovernmental agreement. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of date to reopen Splash pad

Ms. Hall provided Mr. Melton's recommendation of June 12, 2020 for the reopening of the Splash pad. Based on the public health definition of a water park.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to reopen the Splash pad on June 12, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with 5 (five) votes (Howard, Hewett, Goolsby, Stroud, Dodd). Mr. Lawrence abstained.

Approval of Requisitions Greater than \$5,000

Fisher Scientific - \$34,990.09 – 2020 SPLOST

Georgia Fire & Rescue - \$38,723.52 – 2020 SPLOST

Ten-8 - \$21,100.24 – 2020 SPLOST

Calibration Controls & Automation - \$10,418.40 – 2014 SPLOST

Brannen Ford Motor Company - \$143,700 – 2020 SPLOST

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

City Manager's Report

Ms. Hall provided the following report:

- Several upcoming public hearings for the June 15 council meeting:
 - o Conditional use variance for 311 W Main Street (old Jossey house) to have wedding & event venue; Planning & Zoning recommends to not approve the request.
 - o sign variance for Jonah's on Johnston for a mural on side wall; P&Z recommends approval
 - o Annexation of 3 properties for QuikTrip and Floyds Body Shop (to prevent unincorporated island); currently zoned commercial in county; annex as HB
 - o Rezone from TND to OP property on Railroad Avenue owned by St. James Church
 - o Addition of Agricultural Zoning District
- We received water monitoring violation for April 2020 due to operator having to retest a site which requires retesting the site above and below; unfortunately he counted the two retest sites in his monthly testing reports which is not allowed; we are required to submit 9 monthly test and only 7 regular test were submitted for April as the 2 recounts could not be included; you will see the notice regarding this monitoring violation in the utility bills, in the Reporter and on the city website. This has nothing to do with water quality just the monitoring
- Georgia Department of Transportation has submitted a drawing showing signage and intersection upgrades they will be doing; includes new signs and stripping on the roadway; this has been shared with you on the google drive.
- Code Enforcement is back in full swing; 17 letters were mailed out today regarding various violations for blighted properties.
- Plan First renewal application has been submitted.
- County working to get all guidelines in place to hold the summer camps; this is a joint city/county project that we have been doing for several years; the 1st camp will start June 15 and the majority of the camps will be held outside.
- City Hall staff was last department to return to office and that took place with this pay period that began Friday; City Hall is open but we still encourage citizens to make online or phone in payments as much as possible to help reduce the number of people coming in to make payments; 6' distancing is in effect; we are not requiring face masks but do encourage anyone visiting the building to wear a mask.
- 88hp pump motor at Jail Lift Station has failed; no longer make that size motor; CC&A is looking at motor to see if they can rebuild it; new motor prices are coming in from \$30,000 to \$65,000 so far
- Georgia Municipal Association Virtual Convention is open for registration; everyone should have received an email from Erica Powell, Georgia Municipal Association with information on how to register for the virtual training classes being offered
- MEAG Annual Meeting will be virtual meeting as well; information regarding the meeting will be sent out soon from MEAG
- Council previously approved that we process construction draws as they come in monthly and then I include the payment in my report. I reported at the last meeting that we had received and were processing the first pay request from Pellicano, however, their initial request had an error that required them to resubmit the payment request and we just received their resubmittal today in the amount of \$31,849.34
 - o Beginning work for water and sewer tie ins for the new building; last week ground asphalt rather than saw cutting for area where new water line will run down Chambers to Harris; this week will verify elevation of sewer connection in Chambers St, install 2 fire lines and installing the 6" water line. This work will disturb traffic in the area of Harris St. Chambers between Harris and Kimball is closed to through traffic during construction.
- Census 2020 – as of 5/19 Monroe County is only at 56.6% for self-reporting to the Census; please encourage everyone to respond to the Census. As we know, everything that we as a City apply for is based on census count; percentage of special taxes is based upon census count; eligibility of certain grants is based upon census count; while annexation is important and does increase our population, if everyone does not respond and get counted, then our population count is not accurate. Some information from Census2020:
 - o Responding to the census is not only your civic duty; it also affects the amount of funding your community receives, how your community plans for the future, and your representation in government. Specifically, data from the 2020 Census are used to:
 - Ensure public services and funding for schools, hospitals, and fire departments.
 - Plan new homes and businesses and improve neighborhoods.
 - Determine how many seats your state is allocated in the House of Representatives.

City Attorney Report

Mr. Melton had no further business to report.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Wilson mentioned to Council that due to all the recent requests for street closures and sidewalk closures that he and Ms. Hall discussed perhaps allowing the City Manager to approve such requests for sidewalks closures.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to allow the City Manager to approve requests for sidewalk closures. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Additional Business

No additional business was stated.

Public Comments

No one came forward for public comments.

Executive Session

No executive session was held.

Adjourn

There being no further business to report Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.