

**Minutes**  
**Forsyth City Council Meeting**  
**September 21, 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. In attendance for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson; Councilmembers Greg Goolsby, Mike Dodd, Chris Hewett and Melvin Lawrence. Also in attendance was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Manager, Janice Hall and City Clerk, Regina Ivie.

Councilmember John Howard arrived via zoom at 6:04 p.m. Councilmember Julius Stroud arrived at 7:04 during public comments.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried with four (4) votes (Goolsby, Dodd, Hewett and Lawrence).

**Approval of the Minutes from September 8, 2020 Council Meeting**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2020 Council Meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with four (4) votes (Goolsby, Dodd, Hewett and Lawrence).

**Public Hearing for annexation and zoning variance by HEJ Rental Properties, LLC**

Mr. Melton stated the application for annexation to the City for tax parcel 053 012 and 053 012F; 19.53 acres owned by HEJ Rental Properties LLC. has been advertised in the Monroe Reporter on September 2, September 9 and September 16, 2020. The property is located on Cabiness Road/GA HWY 83 North. Upon Annexation a variance application has been submitted for highway business; per the request a precast concrete plant will be housed on the property. Planning & Zoning recommend approval.

Mayor Wilson opened the floor in favor of or opposition of the proposed annexation and zoning variance by HEJ Rental Properties, LLC.

Councilmember John Howard joined the meeting at 6:04 p.m. via zoom.

Ms. Pierson stated Fowler Flemister purchased the property; a portion was in the City and a portion in the County. Planning & Zoning unanimously voted to approve the zoning request.

Mr. George Emami stated he's in favor of the request. The tracts of land to the north are already industrial; neighbors are used to that land use. The request seems fairly consistent to what's there.

Mr. McKenzie Davenport with Fowler Flemister Concrete & HEJ Rental Properties LLC stated the concrete plant has been in operation since October 2019. He's very fortunate to be in the City; they've been very welcomed in the town. Mr. Davenport further stated that Fowler Flemister Concrete is making the concrete; the second business on the property will be pouring it into forms. With the construction going on throughout the state the concrete forms will be shipped all over the state. He feels it's a great opportunity to help the state.

Ms. Jennie Barfield with Bryant Engineering reviewed the details of the precast concrete plant. The company will be manufacturing temporary concrete barriers for traffic; hours of operation Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; with some Saturdays depending on demand. 15 to 20 trucks per day; 15 to 20 employees. Building size is 19,000

square feet. The location is desirable due to the access to interstate 75; being centrally located in Georgia and next to the concrete plant. Ms. Barfield who is a resident of the City further stated she's in support of the project.

There being no further comments for or against the annexation and zoning variance Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the annexation and zoning variance by HEJ Rental Properties, LLC as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Howard, Dodd, Hewett and Lawrence).

#### **Public Hearing for sign variance application of Fox City Brewing Company, LLC**

Mr. Melton stated the sign variance for two murals for Fox City Brewing Company has been unanimously approved by Planning & Zoning at the August 24, 2020 meeting. It was advertised in the Monroe Reporter on September 9 and September 16, 2020.

Mayor Wilson opened the floor in favor of or opposition of the proposed sign variance.

Ms. Pierson mentioned an easy discussion with Planning & Zoning regarding the mural. Planning & Zoning unanimously approved; encouraged by the interest of murals.

Mr. George Emami stated the main intent of the mural is to create a nostalgic feeling around the property; requested two years to complete the process.

There being no further comments for or against the sign variance Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the sign variance as presented with a two year time frame to complete the murals. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Howard, Dodd, Hewett and Lawrence).

#### **Discussion regarding trick or treating downtown**

Ms. Pierson briefly discussed future events within the City including downtown trick or treating; businesses decide whether they participate or not. We won't hold other large fall events this year due to Covid 19.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to move forward with planning of the trick or treating event in the square. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Howard, Dodd, Hewett and Lawrence).

#### **Approval of street closure request – MPHS 2019 Homecoming Parade**

Mr. Lawrence offered a motion to approve the street closure request. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Hewett, Howard, Dodd and Lawrence).

#### **Approval of license agreement of Frances W. Mitchell**

Mr. Melton stated a transfer of a license agreement for a City community service sign at W. Main and W. Johnston is necessary due to the change of ownership of the property.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the license agreement as presented. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Hewett, Howard, Dodd and Lawrence).

#### **Approval of lease agreement by Helby, Inc.**

Mr. Melton stated the license agreement between Helby, Inc. and the City is for the upkeep and lawn maintenance for a "Welcome to Forsyth" sign located at W RR Ave or N Lee St (tax parcel F14 018A) owned by Helby Inc.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the lease agreement as presented. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Hewett, Howard, Dodd and Lawrence).

### **Award bid for West Street Water System Improvement Project**

Ms. Hall clarified the water system improvement project is for West Main Street rather than West Street as the agenda states. Ms. Hall stated a recommendation from Hofstadter & Associates and herself is to award the bid to Helix Group, Inc. in the amount of \$664,845.25

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to award the bid to Helix Group, Inc. in the amount of \$664,845.25. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Hewett, Howard, Dodd and Lawrence).

### **Approval of Requisitions Greater than \$5,000**

**Consolidated Pipe & Supply Co. Inc - \$10,600.00 – 2014 SPLOST**

**Stuart C. Irby Co. - \$6,687.00**

**Calibration Controls Automation - \$6,590.00**

**Federal Eastern International - \$15,982.00**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the requisitions as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried with five (5) votes (Goolsby, Hewett, Howard, Dodd and Lawrence).

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

Ms. Hall provided the following report to Council:

- As previously reported, Wes Cone applied to the Monroe County Health Department for a well on the property for the car wash he will be building for irrigation purposes only. The Health Department denied his request for a permit and Mr. Cone is asking that City Council review the issue. I have spoken with him regarding this and provide you with the same information that I provided to him. This is the ordinance governing wells inside the city limits:
  - Sec. 23-4. Wells within the city.
  - No well shall be allowed within the city for human consumption or human usage, whether the usage be for drinking, toilets, laundry, or other functions and facilities for human beings, within 300 feet of a city public water system line.
  - No well within the city, wherever located, shall be allowed unless the well meets the requirements of Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 12-5-134, and unless installed by a licensed water well contractor in the State of Georgia, and unless approval for said well has been granted by the Monroe County Health Department and a copy of said well permit furnished to the building official of the city. The building official shall present the matter to City Council for issuance or denial of a city well permit, which shall be considered by Council at a public meeting with notice and opportunity to be heard by the applicant. Under no circumstances shall any private well system be connected to the city water system.
- Facial Covering Ordinance – we have provided copies of the ordinance to all businesses located within the city, placed the ordinance on the city Facebook page, emailed to all businesses that we have email addresses for, and in the process of calling all businesses. Because this Ordinance was adopted under Emergency Ordinance powers granted by City Charter, it did not require advertising but will only be in effect for 30 days unless reenacted, so we will place the Ordinance on the agenda every 30 days for your consideration to reenact. Governor Kemp extended the Executive Order for Shelter In Place until September 30, 2020 along with many other areas. Our police officers continue to have disposable mask in their vehicles to give out to those that do not have a mask and want one.
- Water issues in the MLK/Sunset Terrace area last week were caused by the contractor working for GDOT to resurface patches on MLK using a county hydrant meter and flowing the meters along the area at full force. We were not notified that the contractor was using a hydrant meter and especially not a county hydrant meter. We were able to clear the water up as quickly as possible and notified the contractor that they could no longer flow those meters as they were. Working with county water department to be paid for water used from city hydrants.
- Zoom meeting this week with EPD regarding the NOV submitted for copper in water discharge and how we plan to remedy that. This is part of the overall water/sewer upgrade that Council has approved. The application is with USDA for review for funding.
- Tractor approved at last council meeting has been ordered and will take 2-3 weeks for delivery.

- LMIG resurfacing has been completed. Striping Company is to come back and mark handicap parking spaces that they missed last week. Working to submit application to GDOT for 2021 LMIG for Harris (Main to Newton Memorial), Kimball (Main to Newton Memorial) and Chambers (Lee to Harris). This would be completed after the new city hall building is complete and will be necessary due to infrastructure work being done as part of the new building.
- It has been mentioned couple of times about the emergency phone at the police department for afterhours needs. I would like to change the current emergency phone with one similar to those on the DOC campus that are lighted with a blue light and are much larger than the one that we currently have in place. Total cost of labor, materials and equipment will be \$5,034.75. We already have other monitoring cameras in place and will make sure that those are directed at the front door as well.
- Invoice for cost to remove tree from Pinkney Circle that fell blocking the street has been sent to property owner along with request for them to maintain their property.
- CVB has submitted a request to be reimbursed for brochures that were a complete loss in the amount of \$1,252. Unless there is an objection, we will be submitting reimbursement to the CVB for this cost.
- Joint CVB and City Art project is being worked on again. These projects were put on hold early this year. The Art Grant Projects will include fire hydrant painting for the Dog Park, artwork downtown to include the large electric panel boxes and finally “surprise art” downtown to encompass city meters, fire hydrants and possibly additional panel boxes that the city owns.
- Have not yet received completed application packet back from Ram Krishna Investments for the liquor store.
- Public hearing to make Kimball and Harris Streets one-way streets between Main and Adams Streets is being advertised. GDOT will require a permit to be submitted to change traffic flow and signage. A permit will be submitted is the one-way street changes are approved at the public hearing. Also, working to notify each business and property owner with the area surrounding both streets.
- Our Plan First Application renewal was not awarded by DCA. I have a meeting this week with DCA to review our application and the areas that need to be worked on for our next submittal.
- Regional Commission continues to work on the LWCF grant for the park.
- Payment request #5 has been submitted by Pellicano in the amount of \$458,947.44, more than half of that payment request is for the steel. As a reminder, the accounts payable check runs are on the city website under Financial Reports for you to review if you like.
- Mauldin & Jenkins has completed and submitted our 2019 Annual Report to the State. They will come to the October 5 council meeting to review the report with council.
- 2021 budget will be presented in October

Ms. Hall also provided the following additional items during the Council meeting:

- Census update – as of today, citizens have 10 days remaining to take 10 minutes and answer 10 questions to help our community for the next 10 years. Some may say we only want to increase the city population to get more money and that is not entirely an incorrect statement because our census count affects the dollars received for Medicaid, Medicare Part B, SNAP, TANF, WIC, and CDBG programs just to name a few. Georgia’s rural assistance programs received more than \$1.4 billion in 2016. According to data from George Washington University, Georgia received a total of \$40 billion in Census-guided federal spending in fiscal year 2017 and would incur a loss of about \$3,850 for each undercounted person per year. Forsyth is at 56.4% responding to the Census as of 9/20.
- We have been having issues with the manhole at Highway 83 N/N Frontage Road getting stopped up but today was the worse by far. Had to bring in a company with a big jet truck and Davis Plumbing to televise to try to find the problem. When it was finally cleared, the bottom of the manhole has eroded to the point where this must be replaced immediately. Appears that there was an issue with this manhole many years ago and a new manhole was dropped in on top of the old one. Replacing 100’ of 8” sewer line and 12’ deep manhole with 3 inverts for estimate of \$25,000 and having this done as an emergency now that we know what the problem is. Line was running free around 2:00 this afternoon but by 4:30 had begun to clog up again. Contractor is working this evening to use a pump to pump the sewage to the next manhole to keep the line clear so they can begin digging in the morning.

**City Attorney Report**

Mr. Melton stated a public hearing regarding the one way street ordinance will come before Council on October 5, 2020. Mr. Melton added it's to everyone's advantage to complete the 2020 Census before the approaching deadline; the process is simple and quick to complete.

**Mayor's Report**

Mayor Wilson urged everyone to complete the 2020 Census; we get one chance every 10 years to get counted. Ten minutes to affect the next ten years. Everyone needs to be counted; it's very important. Mayor Wilson encouraged everyone to continue to social distance, wear a mask, wash your hands frequently; the numbers are encouraging.

**Additional Business**

Mr. Hewett stated he's received requests about changing Pinkney Circle to a one way street due to parking issues.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Darren Latch at 285 E. Main Street expressed his concerns over the escalating issue with cars speeding in the area. Ms. Angel Latch offered information on research regarding speed humps in the area; she would like 3 speed humps on the street. Ms. Hall is working with the Police Chief to resolve the issue; she further mentioned that other Cities pass the cost of speed humps to the community that's requesting the speed humps/bumps; typically around \$2500.00 each. Mr. Latch further stated he could provide pricing and general information on recycled speed humps at \$400.00 each. Mayor Wilson requested this item be further discussed at the next Council Meeting.

Councilmember Julius Stroud joined the meeting in person at 7:04 p.m.

Mr. Wes Cone expressed his displeasure of a recent permit request for a well within the City for a car wash being built to be used for irrigation purposes only. Monroe County Health Department denied the request due to possible contamination of the aquifer; in his opinion the reason isn't sufficient. After a lengthy discussion regarding the City's ordinance regarding wells within the City Mayor Wilson requested the City Attorney to determine if the Public Health Department has the final authority on the matter.

**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. Lawrence; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:34p.m.