

CITY OF HARTWELL
CALLED METING
April 20, 2017

PRESENT: Council members Mike MacNabb, Tray Hicks, Bill Griggs, Billy Ethridge and Tony Haynie. Also present were City Manager David Aldrich, Janet Fleming, members of the Press/Media and interested citizens.

Absent: Councilman Arthur Craft

The Hartwell City Council met in a special called session on Thursday April 20, 2017 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell, GA. The meeting was called to order by Mayor, Brandon Johnson, who stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss health insurance for city employees.

Mayor Johnson reported that the City's current health insurance coverage expires at the end of this month and several insurance committee meetings had been held pertaining to health insurance for city employees. He continued to explain that for many years the City had been with self-insured plans, but rates continue to increase significantly. The City's current year budget included \$870,000 for health insurance, but the new insurance rate is estimated between \$1.2M and \$1.3M.

It was further reported by Mayor Johnson that the city received rates from some self-insured plans, which were significantly higher than the current plan, while many carriers did not want to participate in self-insured plans. The City's health insurance Broker, Mr. Carey Jackson of Skelton-Morris Insurance Agency presented Mayor and Council with additional options, and Mr. Jackson felt the best option for the city would be to move from a self-insured plan to a traditional, fully-insured plan. His recommendation for the best coverage included going with Blue Cross Blue Shield at the rate of approximately \$870,000, which is the same rate budgeted for the current year.

The Mayor stated that much of the same benefits would be applied under the recommended plan, with no proposed increase in contributions from city employees. However, this fully-insured option would not allow Mayor, Councilmembers, or their dependents to be covered under the plan. Mayor Johnson further stated that city officials would be severely adversely affected, but they would continue to research available options for coverage sometime in the future.

Councilman Haynie asked Mr. Jackson to look into changing the term for health insurance to a calendar year sometime in the future rather than May 1 to April 30 for budgeting purposes.

As discussion continued, Councilman Hicks stated that he was extremely disappointed that this action had to be taken in a called meeting and Council had such a short time to address such an important decision. It was his hope that in the future something could be worked out to make a decision during the City's budget cycle.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to accept the recommendation to go with the fully-insured health coverage with Blue Cross Blue Shield. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously. 5-0

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to adjourn the meeting at approximately 3:15 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously. 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Fleming