

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
March 22, 2012

A special called meeting was held by the Hartwell City Council on Thursday, March 22, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall. All members were present except Councilman Billy Ethridge.

Mayor Jennifer Scott called the meeting to order and stated the purpose of the meeting was to consider two possible change orders for the new city hall regarding furniture and finishing three offices for future use.

Upon recommendation of the Mayor, a motion was made Councilman Arthur Craft to add two items to the agenda; one being a presentation by Attorney Walter Gordon, and another as a change order regarding audio visual. Motion was seconded by Councilman David Little and carried unanimously.

Attorney Gordon addressed Mayor and Council regarding a class action lawsuit filed against online travel companies. He stated that the City voted approximately 5½ years ago to become a named plaintiff, along with Hart County and numerous other cities and counties in Georgia, against the travel companies, contending that the companies owe hotel/motel taxes on rates they charge their customers rather than on the discounted rates they pay local hotels. Attorney Gordon further reported that a partial settlement agreement is proposed, with the defendants to pay the taxes due from May 16, 2011 forward. He urged Mayor and Council to approve the agreement and proposed Resolution authorizing the partial settlement as soon as possible. He also stated that it was not yet known what the dollar figure would be, and other parts of the lawsuit were still being litigated.

As Council began discussing a change order regarding furniture for the new city hall, Mayor Scott stated that a proposal had been received from Office Creations, but the City has the option of requesting quotes from other businesses. Councilman Tony Haynie stated that he found it difficult that none of the present furniture could be used in the new building. The proposal from Office Creations totaled approximately \$177,811, which is a state contract price. Councilman Little also agreed that some of the current furniture could possibly be used, and if taxpayer's money could be saved, the City should do so. The Mayor reiterated that this could be readdressed, but would need to be acted upon pretty quickly. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to investigate further. Motion was seconded by Councilman Mike MacNabb and carried unanimously.

Mayor Scott stated that three offices were not planned to be finished in the new city hall, but were now being considered for completion for future use. As the Mayor reported that two offices that were not planned to be used at present, but now were, Councilman Haynie replied that he understood some of the personnel wanted those offices opposed to where they were going to be. He stated that was not a good enough reason and also questioned why three

offices would be left unfinished in a \$4M building, and wanted to know who authorized this decision. J. M. Wilkerson Co. Vice President Darren Sayer stated that this decision was made during a committee meeting a long time ago while discussing a long list of items to be deducted prior to contract approval in order to reduce cost. It was noted that the cost of completing the unfinished offices, to include the ceiling and floor, would be approximately \$4770. Councilman Little stated that it did not make any sense to leave the floor and ceiling unfinished when the rooms could be used by some organization, such as the Historic Preservation Commission or any other committee, or used for record storage. Councilman Haynie stated that maybe they needed to rethink the closing of the area under the staircase, and instead use the extra rooms for storage. Mr. Sayer stated that he was not in a position to absorb the cost for the closing of the stairwell. Following considerable discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little to finish the three offices. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried 3 to 2, with Councilmen Haynie and MacNabb opposing. Upon being asked by Mr. Sayer if this was an added change order or if funds would come out of contingency funds already in place, the motion was amended by Councilmen Little to state that the funds would be taken from contingency. Motion seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried 3 to 2, with Councilmen Haynie and MacNabb opposing.

As discussion ensued regarding audio visual equipment for the new city hall, Councilman Hicks stated that the proposed projectors had been switched to flat screen televisions. Three 46" flat screen TV's are proposed; one for the large conference room upstairs, one for the small conference room downstairs, and one for the Police Department Squad Room. In discussing the necessary equipment, and items that could possibly be eliminated, it was felt by Council that the flat screen TV could be eliminated from the small conference room downstairs. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve PCO #9 (Project Change Order) in the amount of \$9,882, utilizing contingency funds. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk