

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

March 4, 2013

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held Monday, March 4, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street. Present were: Mayor Jennifer Scott, Councilmembers Arthur Craft, Billy Ethridge, Tony Haynie, Tray Hicks, David Little, and Mike MacNabb. Also present were City Attorney Rob Leverett, City Manager David Aldrich, City Clerk Jean Turner, members of the press, and visitors.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Scott, who led the assembly in the Pledge to the United States Flag, followed by a moment of silence, with the invocation then given by City Manager David Aldrich.

Mayor's Announcements:

- A sincere "thank you" extended to the Chamber of Commerce and its dedicated volunteers for hosting an extremely successful Eggs & Issues event this year, as well as gratitude for all who attended.
- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission recently held their monthly board meeting at Hartwell City Hall, which was an enormous success thanks to City Manager David Aldrich for organizing the event. The Mayor also expressed thanks to community leaders who were in attendance. The event was catered by Sue and Gary McCurley.
- The month of March is Red Cross Month, as proclaimed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in March 1943. March is also Women's History Month, and March 3rd marked 100 years since 5,000 women marched on Washington, DC demanding their right to vote. Today, the success of women and their contribution to this country extends from military, to the workforce, to education.
- The City of Hartwell wishes to express its sincere sympathy to family and friends of former council member George Rooks, who passed away recently. The Mayor acknowledged some of the distinguished accomplishments of Mr. Rooks, stating that he held many positions in the city and community, too numerous to mention.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the February 4, 2013 regular meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve as submitted. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman MacNabb to approve a request for the Little League Opening Day Parade on March 23rd. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft to approve a request for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on the courthouse lawn on March 30th. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

As discussion ensued regarding the possibility of increasing the hotel/motel tax in increments from 5% to 8%, the City Manager reported that the request had been forwarded to Representative Alan Powell for submission to state legislature, but it was learned that the percentages could not be increased in increments. Councilman Hicks stated that he was still in favor of increasing the tax to 8%, and funding could be used to market new business in the area. Mayor Scott also reiterated the need to get away from dependency of local taxpayers for revenue base, and this hotel/motel tax would be taxing transients. Councilman Haynie recommended the issue be tabled for discussion later in the year, with Councilman Little agreeing. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to move forward with hotel/motel tax increase to 8%. Motion died due to lack of a second.

Speaking on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Bobbi Busha reported that the Chamber had been approached by the Outdoor Channel regarding a 30-minute show featuring seasoned professional anglers on Lake Hartwell, which would air six times. She stated that approximately 41 million subscribers watch this channel and the community could really capitalize on this exposure. The network would also do an hour program at the high school to emphasize education regarding outdoor careers. The cost for this network exposure is \$6,800.00, of which funds are already included in the Chamber's budgeted funds from the City. A motion was made by Councilman Little to approve use of the funds as requested for this outdoor venture. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman Craft, and carried unanimously to declare the City's 1969 fire truck as surplus equipment.

On behalf of the Downtown Development Authority, Ms. Peggy Vickery reported that the City's Public Works Director and Street Department personnel had stated that the City's current downtown Christmas decorations would probably not last another year due to being too worn. She stated that she had received two quotes for lighted garland for street poles, one for \$65.00 per pole and one at a cost of \$107.00 per pole. As discussion ensued, Councilman Hicks moved that the City pay one half for new lights and ask the County to pay one half. Motion died due to lack of a second. After further discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little to purchase the lights, and if needed, take the money from contingency funds, and also go ahead and ask the County if they would be willing to pay half the cost. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously. The cost for the new lights is anticipated at approximately \$3,900.00.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Little, and carried unanimously to table consideration of beer/wine license for Ramano F. Stowers.

Due to the resignation of Ms. Marian Sanders from the Planning & Zoning Commission, a motion was made by Councilman Little to appoint Ms. Mary Gidley to serve as a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

The City Manager reported on the following activities:

- Meter station at Nancy Hart is complete.
- Recycling contract has been executed and recycling company will install signage, using the City's logo.
- Continuing to work on crosswalk issue; one on Franklin Street, and two on Benson Street. City has material cost; however, DOT now requiring engineer report, which was not mentioned in their original correspondence to the City. Also have the option of electrical power or solar-powered crosswalk signals.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk