

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

December 1, 2008

The Hartwell City Council met in regular session on Monday, December 1, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 500 E. Howell Street , with all members present. Mayor Matt Beasley called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

Following the invocation given by Mayor Beasley, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Hearing no corrections or additions to the minutes of the November 3, 2008 public hearing and regular meeting, and minutes of the November 20, 2008 public hearing and called meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Councilman Evans and carried unanimously.

Following the second reading of Flood Damage Control Ordinance No. 2008-13, a motion was made by Councilman Gordon to adopt the Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

Following the second reading of Ordinance No. 2008-14, a motion was made by Councilman Gordon to adopt the Ordinance, which approves the fiscal year 2009 budget. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. The City Manager stated that the millage rate would remain the same at 9.60 mills. Water/sewer rates will increase by 2.6% due mainly to a state mandate of 10% reduction in water use due to the severe drought. This increase is anticipated to help with the operation and maintenance of the Water-Sewer Department. The budget also includes a 5.6% increase in sanitation fees, which stems directly from a \$7.50 per ton increase received by Hart County in October.

The City Manager also highlighted budget changes for grant recipients as directed by Council, which included a reduction from \$16,000 to \$10,500 for the Northeast Georgia Animal Shelter. The balance of that savings of \$5,500 is listed in the 2009 budget as item #57215 under General Government for a future anticipated local animal shelter. The Library contribution is increased from \$16,000 to \$18,800. As suggested earlier by Council, \$5,000 was taken from the Contingency fund, of which \$2,800 would be added to the Library's fund, and the other \$2,200 to be contributed to the Hartwell Downtown Development Authority (HDDA.) Councilman Gordon asked that it be made clear that the additional \$2,200 appropriation to the HDDA is to be used for seed money for the \$3,500 DDA co-op advertising, and not for general purposes. He also asked that a letter to that effect be sent to the DDA.

A motion was made by Councilman Gordon to approve Resolution No. 01-12-08, revising certain utility fees. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried 5 to 1, with Councilman Van Senkbeil opposing.

Upon recommendation of Fire Chief Terry Vickery and City Manager David Aldrich, no action was taken regarding a proposal received from McCord Communications for a new emergency siren. It was noted that further review is needed before the Fire Chief brings the issue back before Mayor and Council for consideration. Mayor Beasley also encouraged everyone to sign up for the Hart County EMS "Code Red" calling system. He stated that citizens could contact the

EMS or go to the County web site and enter their phone number (preferably a landline number) and as emergency situations occur, such as tornado citing, citizens will receive warning calls to that effect. Councilwoman Mayfield stated that although she would be participating in this calling system, she felt the City still needed some type emergency warning system.

Upon recommendation of the Mayor, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to appoint Mr. Duane Hall to serve on the Planning and Zoning Board, replacing Mr. John Feltman upon his resignation from the Board. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Evans, seconded by Councilman Little, and carried unanimously to accept the Mayor's recommendation to appoint Mr. Gary Hughes to serve on the Hartwell Housing Authority Board.

Following discussion regarding bids received for street resurfacing, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept the bid from Stratton & Sons Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$56,851 to include portions of South Forest Avenue from Howell Street to Linder Street, from the corner of Carter and Benson Streets to South Forest Avenue (in front of The Hartwell Sun,) and also Saliba Drive if agreement is worked out with Larry Torrence regarding construction in the Cottage Village Subdivision. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Gordon, and carried unanimously to accept the low bid of \$21,957.60 from Anderson Fire and Safety for equipment for the Fire Department.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve applications for renewal of beer/wine licenses. Councilman Hicks amended his motion to state that the renewals included the Kobe Japanese Express Restaurant, contingent upon that establishment presenting their renewal application to the City Clerk in a timely manner. Motion was seconded by Councilman Gordon and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Gordon, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to approve license renewal applications for distilled spirits by the drink.

A motion was made by Councilman Gordon, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to approve a license for distilled spirits by the drink for Mr. Parke Skelton.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve a request for a Hispanic parade to be held on December 14th at 10:30 a.m. to begin in front of the Hart County Library and continue down Benson Street to the Catholic Church, using one truck with a replica of the Virgin Mary on the vehicle, with people walking behind the truck. Motion was seconded by Councilman Evans and carried unanimously.

Mayor Beasley reported that he had received a request from Hartwell Elementary School Principal Kathy Leard for changes to the one-way traffic from Second Street to Cleveland Avenue (in front of Strickland Funeral Home.) Following a brief discussion, Councilman Little moved to have the City Manager and Chief of Police review the request and come back to Council with a recommendation. Motion was seconded by Councilman Gordon and carried

unanimously.

Upon recommendation of the City Manager, a motion was made by Councilman Gordon to allow City employees to have an extra half day off on Wednesday, December 24th (Christmas Eve) beginning at 12:00 noon, and also Thursday and Friday, December 25th and 26th in observance of the Christmas holidays. Motion was seconded by Councilman Evans and carried unanimously.

In following the annual tradition, Elberton Mayor Larry Guest acknowledged that the Mayor's Cup once again be presented to Mayor Beasley in recognition of the fact that the Hart County Bulldog Football Team was the winner this season over the Elberton Blue Devils. Mayor Guest stated that he was very proud of the Elberton team and indicated that the Blue Devils may be down but would come back one day and defeat the Bulldogs. He commended the Bulldog team for their win, as well as commending Hartwell's Mayor, City Manager, and Chief of Police for assistance given on the day of the ballgame.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Gordon to enter into executive session at 7:55 p.m. to discuss the possible acquisition of property. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

Following the executive session, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks adjourn the executive session and go back into regular session to discuss facts concerning certain real estate property being considered for purchase by the City. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Gordon to authorize the City Manager to obtain an appraisal of the property as soon as possible and to request an extension on the purchase offer, indicating this request to the selling party. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried 4 to 1, with Councilman Evans opposing and Councilman Senkbeil having left the meeting.

It was suggested by the Mayor that all options be looked at regarding the needs of the City and departments. It was also discussed that the City look at options with Hart County .

While Mayor Beasley expressed his concern of being careful during the current economic crisis, Councilman Gordon felt that the City needed to move forward. Councilman Little also stated that the price wouldn't be any cheaper in the future.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner

City Clerk