

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

October 6, 2008

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held on Monday, October 6, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall with all members present. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Beasley, who extended a welcome to everyone in attendance.

Mayor Beasley extended a welcome to Boy Scout Troop #33 along with their Scoutmaster David Jenkins. The Mayor explained that the Boy Scouts were working on their citizenship and merit badges.

Following the invocation given by Mr. David Jenkins, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance as led by Boy Scout Bryant Davenport.

As the Mayor read a proclamation to proclaim the month of October as Down Syndrome Awareness Month, Ms. Ioka Freeman also urged everyone to participate in the 4th Annual Buddy Walk to be held October 25th.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting, a motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield to approve the minutes as written. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Michele Dipert reported that the Chamber was working on a new brochure, and she was happy to report that Hartwell was recognized as #9 in best places to live in rural America . She presented Mayor and Council with a packet that included the Chamber's annual budget report as well as other information, including tourism projects for the year. She also introduced Tourism Task Force Co-Chairs Larry Torrence, Pamela Camp, and Tammy Mobley. Ms. Dipert and Mayor Beasley also reminded everyone of the annual Mayor's Monster Mash to be held on October 31st from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. around the town square and on Depot Street .

Tourism Task Force Co-Chair Larry Torrence briefly explained that the task force was formed to re-examine where Hartwell and Hart County was in light of the economic situation, and he was looking forward to coming back before Mayor and Council at a later date to give a more specific update.

Mayor and Council heard a request from Attorney Stephen Carter, asking for a refund of his occupation tax paid during 2004, 2005 and 2006 due to a Supreme Court Law exempting attorneys from having to pay occupation tax in the jurisdiction where they practice law. A motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield to authorize the refund in the amount shown on city records, which is approximately \$100.00. Motion was seconded by Councilman Gordon and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Gordon, seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously to approve a request from the Hartwell Pilot Club for the annual Depot Days to be held on Depot Street November 1st.

Following the second reading of Ordinance No. 2008-10, amending the Ordinance regulating

alcohol server's licenses, a motion was made by Councilman Little to adopt the Ordinance as presented to Council. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

Following the second reading of Ordinance No. 2008-11, revising and updating the City's Ordinance regulating occupation tax, a motion was made by Councilman Gordon to adopt the Ordinance as presented. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

Mayor and Council heard the first reading of Ordinance No. 2008-12 regarding a request from Juniper Court , L.P. for annexation of property located on Nancy Drive .

Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept the grant agreement between the City and the Department of Community Affairs regarding administration of grant funds in the amount of \$7,500.00 to assist the Hart County Community Theatre, and also to accept the indemnification agreement between the City and Hart County Community Theatre. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

City Manager David Aldrich reported that only one response was received regarding the Request for Proposals (RFP) of Qualifications for Innovative Utility and Energy Savings Solutions. As stated by Mr. Aldrich, no pricing amounts were requested in the RFP, and it was his recommendation that the responding firm, Johnson Controls, be selected to perform an evaluation of the City's facilities, including water metering accuracy and billing system. A motion was made by Councilman Gordon to proceed with the project based on Johnson Control's proposal. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. The City Manager also stated that he wanted to clarify that if it is found to be cost effective and if Council decides to move forward with upgrades and improvements, the City will still be using Johnson Controls.

Mayor Beasley explained that the Masons of Georgia began a Child Identification Program (GACHIP) to assist law enforcement in locating missing children. At no cost to the general public, the Masons provide parents or guardians with packets (GACHip Pack) of materials necessary to generate identifying items of a child. In the event a child is missing, the GACHIP Pack is given to law enforcement as an aid in recovery and identification. The Mayor stated that the local Masons planned to launch an event in Hartwell on November 15th and were asking for a partner to endorse the program for moral support only. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to support this program. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

The Mayor recognized police officers who, along with Fire Department personnel and EMT's, fingerprinted over 40 children recently at Home Depot.

Mayor and Council heard a complaint by Ms. Freddie Glaze over her recent arrest by the Police Department.

Mayor Beasley called for a 5-minute recess of the meeting at approximately 7:35 p.m.

Following the recess, the meeting was reconvened at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Speaking on behalf of the Hart County NAACP and residents of the Rome community, Attorney John Clark stated that residents were dissatisfied with the work that has already occurred with the Rome Neighborhood Community Development Block Grant project. Attorney Clark asked Council to reconsider what had already been done, stating that the sidewalk on Savannah Street could be a major hazard due to the sidewalk being right up against the street, and the Slaton Avenue sidewalk was also a concern of the citizens. Councilwoman Mayfield also stated that the project was unsatisfactory to the community. Attorney Clark recommended that a citizens committee from the Rome target area be formed to work with Council to resolve issues of concern. Councilman Gordon stated that the project should not be held up, and once the project is completed, a committee could be formed to review any concerns. Councilman Hicks also stated that he would support a committee, but stopping the project was not a viable option. County Commission Chairman R. C. Oglesby stated that the project should be stopped temporarily and the City should hire a temporary on-site road engineer. Councilman Little responded that the City already had a professional engineer to oversee the project. Mr. Oglesby stated that he would ask the County Commissioners to consider assisting the City in widening Savannah Street by two feet, and requested that a representative from the City attend the next County Commission meeting. As further discussion ensued, Councilman Hicks stated that a citizens group met with Council in a called meeting recently and all issues were approved with the exception of widening of Savannah Street . He stated that if a citizens committee is formed, he would like for Mr. Ed McIntosh to be a part of that group. Councilman Little moved that the Mayor, City Manager, or City Engineer Charlie Armentrout, attend the next County Commission meeting and make a proposal of what assistance the City would like from the County. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried 5 to 0, with Councilman Senkbeil having already left the meeting at approximately 8:45 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks that a citizens group be formed, with Mr. Ed McIntosh to be a part of that committee. As Councilwoman Mayfield explained that Mr. McIntosh may not be available to serve on a committee due to currently working out of town, the motion was amended by Councilman Hicks to speak with Mr. McIntosh to see if he has any recommendations. Motion was seconded by Councilman Evans and carried 5 to 0.

The City Manager reported that a resident had requested to be added to the City's existing water main in the unincorporated area around Fleming Circle on Old Hwy. 29. He stated that four customers were already on the very small, inadequate one-inch line, and asked Council if they wished to upgrade the water main with approximately 2,000 feet of 6" line and allow the additional hookup. Councilman Evans asked if it would be cost effective to also install a gas line. The City Manager responded that he would speak with the customers about this. A motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield to proceed with the 6" line improvement. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried 5 to 0. Councilman Little also asked the City Manager to explore the possibility of additional gas customers.

The City Manager reported that a contract price of \$14,300 was received for construction of approximately 210 feet of sidewalk on Webb Street . He stated that approximately \$3,800 of that cost was engineering fee. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Evans to move forward with construction of the sidewalk extension on Webb Street , using City labor forces in order to reduce cost, and the funds to come out of the City's sidewalk fund. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Mayfield offered a motion to take up one additional item of business. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

Mr. Chris Nelson complained to Mayor and Council about noise, dogs, and old junk cars in the Mill Hill neighborhood. He stated that the problem with unleashed dogs was out of control, with too many dogs and not enough enforcement by the City. Councilman Little stated that he would like for the City to come up with a very strict ordinance regarding animal control and barking dogs, as well as addressing the noise ordinance. It was also noted that in accordance with the current ordinance, complaints of barking dogs or noise are to be submitted in writing to the Chief of Police.

A letter of appreciation from Angela R. McAuley was read by the Mayor. Ms. McAuley stated that she, along with the residents of the Third Street neighborhood, wished to express thanks to the Mayor's office, Police Department, Sheriff's Department, and Street Department workers for making their neighborhood a safer place for children. In a recent letter submitted to the Mayor, Ms. McAuley had concerns regarding traffic in the neighborhood. She stated that police officers were doing a good job of patrolling the area.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner

City Clerk