

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

April 7, 2014

Present: Mayor Brandon Johnson, Councilmembers Arthur Craft, Billy Ethridge, Tray Hicks, Mike MacNabb, Tony Haynie, and Bill Griggs. Others present included City Manager David Aldrich, City Attorney Robert Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, Representatives of the Press/Media, and Interested Citizens.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held Monday, April 7, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Brandon Johnson, who welcomed everyone in attendance.

Following the invocation given by Mr. Chuck Whelan, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

Mayor's Comments:

- First Pro-Business Task Force met last week, with great participation. Various issues were discussed, including: sidewalks, downtown parking, greenspace, trash cans in front of businesses, annexation, Sunday alcohol sales, utilities, Bell's Shopping Center, the Marina, etc. Additional meetings will be held in the next few weeks.
- Work is anticipated to begin soon on the burned Enigma building, and also work on ditches on Fairview Avenue. Citizens are urged to use caution in these areas.

The following Proclamations were read by the Mayor, proclaiming:

- Week of April 20 – 26, 2014 as Georgia Garden Week
- April 2014 as Confederate History and Heritage Month
- April 19, 2014 as Caldonia Allen Day, in recognition of Ms. Allen's 103rd Birthday

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the March 3, 2014 regular council meeting, a motion was made by Councilman MacNabb to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Mayor and Council heard an update of Chamber activities from Chamber of Commerce Director Nicki Meyer. Upon request by the Chamber, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve the closing of streets for an Easter Egg Hunt on April 19th on the courthouse lawn, and also closing of streets for the annual Cars & Guitars event on May 24th. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Mayor Johnson stated that the executive session is removed from this meeting agenda, and upon his request, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to add to the agenda the discussion of the Downtown Café. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

Following the second reading of Annexation Ordinance No. 2014-01, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve the Ordinance, annexing the property of Brian Burroughs (Swamp Guinea Restaurant) into the city as B-2, General Business District. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Griggs, and carried unanimously to approve the application of Brian Burroughs for a beer/wine and alcohol license for the Swamp Guinea

Restaurant located on the Reed Creek Highway, and also approve Mr. Burrough's request for an outdoor seating area.

A motion was made by Councilman MacNabb to approve a request by TORCH of Hartwell, Inc. for a temporary alcohol permit for a fund-raising event to be held May 15, 2014 at the Savannah River Productions on Forest Avenue. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried 5 to 0, with Councilman Griggs recusing himself due to being a member of TORCH.

A motion was made by Councilman Griggs, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to approve a request from the Downtown Development Authority for a temporary alcohol permit for the Dancin' on Depot event on June 27, 2014. This event is held inside the fenced-in area of Depot Street.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve a request from Savannah River Productions for a temporary alcohol permit for a Dinner Theatre scheduled for April 11 and 12, 2014 at the Savannah River Playhouse located on South Forest Avenue. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried 5 to 0, with Councilman Griggs recusing himself due to being involved with the Theatre.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge, seconded by Councilman Craft, and carried unanimously to approve a preventive maintenance agreement with Xylem, Inc. for the City's Flygt pumps at a cost of \$8,001.00 per year. As questioned by Councilman Craft, the City Manager explained that Xylem had a boom truck with the ability to remove pumps from the tank.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to accept a quote from Xylem Water Solutions in the amount of \$5,466.13 for a new pump for the Wal-Mart Lift Station.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to accept the low bid of \$16,492.85 from Natural Gas Trade for gas regulator station work on Hwy. 172. It was noted that this was a budgeted item.

Following discussion and consideration, a motion was made by Councilman MacNabb to accept the low bid of \$31,887.81 from Megel Chevrolet for a new police car. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. Other quotes received, including add-ons, were from Hardy Chevrolet in the amount of \$39,905.41 and Ed Murdock Ford in the amount of \$36,422.91.

Mayor Johnson reported that two quotes had been received for three emergency weather sirens; one quote in the amount of \$65,652.00 from EDN Systems of Sandy Springs and one from Mobile Communications of Lawrenceville in the amount of \$62,150.00. The City has already received a grant for the sirens in the amount of \$42,500 from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to accept the quote from Mobile Communications in the amount of \$62,150.00, and authorize the expenditure of approximately \$20,000 for the sirens. The City Manager stated that this expenditure would probably come from the City's general fund reserves. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. The City Manager suggested that one siren be placed in the area of the Patterson Street water tank, one in the area of Quality Foods at the Village Shopping Center on Benson Street, and the other at the Bell's Shopping Center on Athens Street.

The City Manager reported that he had anticipated having quotes by this meeting for the YMCA lift station, but quotes had not yet been received. He explained that two pumps are down, with a mobile backup unit currently being used. He requested that Council authorize him to move forward with this and he would come back before Council with numbers. A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to authorize the City

Manager to move forward with this as requested. After further discussion, Councilman Ethridge amended his motion to authorize the City Manager to move forward in determining the pump size needed and begin the process of obtaining quotes, and bring back before Council. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously. It was also noted that this expense would come out of SPLOST funds.

As stated by the Mayor, quotes for the City's health insurance coverage was not yet ready to be presented, and a called meeting may have to be scheduled due to the term of the current insurance policy expiring May 1st.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Haynie, and carried unanimously to accept a quote from Georgia Municipal Association for the City's Property and Liability Insurance coverage in the amount of \$128,007.00. It was stated that the other quote from a local company was in the amount of \$147,000.00.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to table action on Resolution No. 04-07-14 until official numbers are received for the proposed Oakview Crossing of Hartwell, LLC project. The Resolution authorizes application for a Rural Economic Development Loan for the project. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously. Councilman Hicks also stated that he would be ok with having a called meeting to approve the Resolution once the numbers are known.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Griggs, and carried unanimously to approve the reappointments of Ms. Kaye Chafin and Ms. Mary Carter to the Library Board.

It was explained by the City Manager that the City's videoing of sewer lines had identified the sewer line on Johnny Street as one of the prime areas to be upgraded. These upgrades are required as part of a consent order issued by the Environmental Protection Division. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to authorize the City Manager to seek quotes for the sewer line upgrade on Johnny Street. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Councilman Hicks discussed the upcoming Music Festival to be held at the Lake Hartwell Mega Ramp on May 24th. Upon request by Councilman Hicks, a motion was made by Councilman MacNabb to close the Mega Ramp area to boats and trailers from 10:00 p.m. on Friday, May 23rd until 12:00 noon on Sunday, May 25th. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried 5 to 0, with Councilman Hicks recusing himself from voting.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to authorize the surplus of the old backhoe that was recently replaced.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to authorize the City Manager to move forward in seeking bids for resurfacing of streets under the Department of Transportation's Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) program, and also obtain quotes on finishing Fairview Avenue, between Franklin Street and Powell Road. The streets submitted for resurfacing under the LMIG program were Campbell, Cleveland, Brown, and Holly. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously. The City Manager stated that quotes received for additional streets not under the LMIG program would probably have to come from SPLOST funds. Councilman MacNabb also stressed the need for North Forest Avenue to be added to the list for street resurfacing.

As discussion ensued regarding Police Chief Anthony Davis' proposed Policy and Procedures for towing services, Councilman Hicks stated that he was basically ok with the Policy, but recommended changes to include that an impound lot of the towing service be maintained within seven (7) miles of the city limits of

Hartwell inside of Hart County, and that towing services be conducted in a timely manner, preferably within 30 minutes. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept the proposed Policy and Procedures with the recommended changes. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously. After further discussion and upon recommendation of City Attorney Rob Leverett, the motion and second were amended by Councilmen Hicks and MacNabb to also have the City Attorney review the City's Ordinances to make sure provisions included in current Ordinances are consistent with the Policy and Procedures regarding towing services. Motion was carried unanimously, 6 to 0.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve a request from Downtown Café for an outdoor seating area as shown on a submitted drawing. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

Mayor Johnson explained that there were certain measures that Council had to go through relating to Hart State Park. As the City had asked for recommended consultants to conduct a marketing study on a resort development inside the Hart State Park area, a recommendation was received for a consultant who is involved with major projects throughout the state. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept a proposal from PKF Consulting for a marketing study in the amount of \$18,000.00, with the funds to be taken from Economic Development Fund, and once the project moves forward and someone is brought in, the \$18,000 will be repaid and put back into the Economic Development Fund. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

City Manager's Comments:

- A CarFit event is scheduled for April 22nd beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the parking lot adjacent to the City Fire Department. This is a statewide program to assist citizens to become more familiar with operation of their vehicles. The event will be assisted by a representative from Georgia Mountains Regional Commission. Senator Bill Jackson will also be present for the event, as well as Representative Alan Powell.
- Quite a bit of headway has been made with demolition efforts, as instructors from Greenville Tech conducted a course at city hall recently. Four City employees went through the program and were certified, as well as six others representing three contractors.
- Would like for Council to allow Mr. Carey Jackson to make a proposal from the Downtown Development Authority.
- Due to Microsoft discontinuing Windows XP, which is used currently with the Police Department's Live Scan fingerprint equipment, two quotes were received for new fingerprint equipment, with the lowest quote being \$9,629 and the other quote over \$27,000. A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously to add to the agenda quotes for fingerprint equipment and also a request by Carey Jackson.

A motion was made by Councilman Griggs, seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously to accept the lowest quote in the amount of \$9,629 from Eagle Advantage Solutions, Inc. for a new fingerprint system for the Police Department.

Mr. Carey Jackson reported that the Downtown Development Authority Executive Board had voted to request that the DDA Executive Director become an employee of the City. He stated that officials from surrounding areas had been polled, which showed that many DDA Directors are employees of a municipality. Councilman Haynie moved to table this request until all issues and concerns could be addressed. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. Councilman Hicks also stated that he had mixed feelings due to having spoken to someone from the Department of Community Affairs who did not recommend that a DDA Executive Director be a city employee.

Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks shared that a quote on facebook commended Officer Ed Starks, commenting that Officer Starks had helped them search for a lost dog, and stating that Officer Starks was the best officer they knew, who had a good heart.
- Councilman Haynie clarified some miscommunications regarding the Hart State Park. He explained that the City will be negotiating with the Corps of Engineers and not with the State, and the City has no intention of running the Park.
- Councilman Craft stated that the Hart County Health Department Board met last month, and out of 159 counties in the state, Hart County ranks number 45.

Public Comments:

- Ms. Mary Beth Focer voiced complaints regarding her requests for copies of city documents. The City Attorney informed Ms. Focer that it would be best to submit a written request, being specific of which documents she was requesting. Mayor Johnson stated also that the City would make sure the law is followed regarding the Open Records Act.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:25 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk