

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
August 6, 2012

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Arthur Craft, Billy Ethridge, Tony Haynie, Tray Hicks, David Little, and Mike MacNabb

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Jennifer Scott, City Manager David Aldrich, City Attorney Rob Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, Members of the Media, and Interested Citizens

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was called to order by Mayor Jennifer Scott on Monday, August 6, 2012 at approximately 7:00 p.m.

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence, after which the invocation was given by City Manager David Aldrich.

Mayor Scott took a moment to express what a wonderful job that had been accomplished with the new city hall building, expressing appreciation to the City Manager, members of Council, and others in having the project complete.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of July 2, 2012, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to approve as submitted. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Director Michael Crump presented an update of planned activities in the coming months. Mr. Crump stated that the City's "Scarecrow Bash" was such a huge success last year that surrounding areas have also shown interest in the event in October. The Hartwell DDA will also host the Northeast Georgia Travel Association in October. Councilman Haynie suggested that the DDA also contact other DDA's to get ideas for downtown growth.

Councilman Hicks reported that approximately \$239,199 remained in the city hall contract price. The old city hall structure has been demolished and paving of the new parking lot should begin in about a week.

Mayor Scott stated that item #9 would be stricken from the agenda regarding the completion and closing of the city hall committee.

Upon recommendation of Mayor Scott, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to establish a Research Committee regarding the need for a new Fire Department, with the committee consisting of Tony Haynie as Chairman, along with Council members Billy Ethridge, Tray Hicks, and Fire Chief Terry Vickery. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to seek quotes for a cleaning service to clean the city hall facility once a week.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little to authorize the City Manager to obtain quotes for transferring all existing paper documents to electronic format as well as investigation of off-site backup system. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Mayor Scott reported that two bids, one for the Police Department and one for city hall, had already been received for new computers and software. As the Mayor recommended that a few more bids be obtained, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to authorize the City Manager to seek other bids for the new computers and software. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously. Councilman Hicks commented that he would be glad to review the bids, as he didn't think anyone on staff would know what was needed. Mayor Scott replied, "I contend that any company coming in that knows what they are doing can also assess our needs as well." The Mayor also reported that funding for this expenditure would come from Police Technology Funds.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously to accept a proposal from Smith Data in the amount of \$1,801.34 per month for utility billing service. The City Manager explained that the billing amount was much less than what it cost the City to process the bills each month. The Mayor also stated that this would eliminate privacy concerns.

A motion was made by Councilman Little, seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously to approve the Local Option Sales Tax Agreement with Hart County. The agreement reflects that the City of Hartwell will receive 21% of the proceeds generated from sales and use tax.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge, seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Hart County Archway Partnership. Both Mayor and City Manager stated that the Archway Program had been an available resource for projects and tremendously beneficial for the entire community.

Following the second reading of Ordinance No. 2012-02, amending financial provisions for utility funds, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve the Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously. The City Manager explained that the amendment reflects that excess utility funds may be used for legitimate purposes.

Councilman Hicks explained that the current City's pictorial logo presented problems when transferring the logo to objects such as business cards, letterhead, shirts, etc. He suggested that the logo be updated by having a contest, with an incentive of giving local participants additional points, and a prize of \$200.00 for the winner. He further stated that only the pictorial portion of the logo would be updated. It was suggested by Councilman Little that the entire Council be the judge of the different entries and when the top 3 or so are chosen, let City staff also assist in selecting a winner. Ms. Mary Gidley suggested also that the entire community vote on which one they liked. Councilman Hicks moved that a committee be established to write guidelines for submitting a new logo for the City's emblem, with Councilman Hicks as the chair of this committee, along with committee members Councilmen Craft and Ethridge. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously. A motion was also made by Councilman Hicks that this committee establish guidelines and a prize of \$200 be awarded to the first place winner. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously. It was also recommended by Councilman Haynie that the Art Department of the High School be contacted for participation.

As discussion began regarding replacement of the City's weather warning siren, the City Manager explained that the current siren was a WWII era model, and asked for Council's direction in pursuing replacement of the siren. A motion was made by Councilman Little to table the issue until next month to allow the City Manager to investigate where funding would come from. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

In response to a proposal from Hart County Water and Sewer Authority (HCWSA), a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to extend a 12-inch water line to the first bridge on the Reed Creek Hwy. (Hwy. 51). Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. Following the vote by Council, Councilman Haynie read a prepared statement regarding the purchase of water by the HCWSA. He stated that while he supported the extension of the water line, he had very little hope that HCWSA Chairman Pat Goran would use the water. He further stated that the amount of water purchased by the Authority declined after Council approved selling the Authority water at a lower rate than Royston or Lavonia. He referenced that less than three million gallons of water was purchased by the HCWSA from the City in 2011, while approximately one hundred twenty millions gallons was purchased during 2003. County Commissioner Bill Myers stated that he had met with Mr. Goran this day, and felt that the City should see an increase in the amount of water purchased by the Authority when a new valve is installed this week.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to accept a proposal from Hodge Enterprises in the amount of \$34,320 for gas main replacement on Hwy. 77. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

Due to the Labor Day holiday the first Monday in September, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to set the next regular meeting of City Council for Tuesday, September 4, 2012. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

It was the consensus of Mayor and Council to have an Open House Reception for the new city hall on Thursday, August 30, 2012 between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously to adjourn into executive session at 8:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussing potential litigation.

Following the executive session, a motion was made by Councilman Little to adjourn the executive session back into regular session. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft to add items to the agenda. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to authorize the City Manager to purchase a new pump for Cedar Creek Lift Station. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to request the City Attorney to proceed with filing a lawsuit against Electric Motor Company. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted...

Jean Turner, City Clerk