

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
August 4, 2014

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

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held on Monday, August 4, 2014 in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell. The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Johnson.

Following the invocation given by City Manager David Aldrich, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor's Comments:

- Reminded everyone of the upcoming "Wet & Wild" event scheduled on Lake Hartwell the following weekend.
- Water Department continues to work very hard to make sure the water from Lake Hartwell is safe, following complaints of odor and bad taste.
- The City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating has been changed to level "2", one of 26 municipalities in the state to receive the low rating, which could lower insurance rates for citizens.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the July 7, 2014 Council meeting, a motion was made by Councilman MacNabb to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Mayor Johnson presented a Proclamation received from the Office of Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, paying tribute to William Dooley, a former Hartwell Police Officer and Town Marshall who was killed in February 1883. Mr. Dooley was involved in a conflict whereby he arrested someone and later that day a friend of the arrested individual came back and murdered Mr. Dooley. It is believed that Mr. Dooley was the only police officer from Hartwell to be killed in the line of duty. The Proclamation will remain in the Office of the Chief of Police, with hopes of locating Mr. Dooley's next of kin in order to present the Governor's Proclamation to them.

The Mayor presented a portrait of James Robert Meredith, one of Hartwell's first Mayors. The portrait was presented to the City recently by Mayor Meredith's grandson, professional artist Robert Meredith, who also painted the portrait in memory of his grandfather.

A Certificate of Achievement Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the fiscal year ending 2012 was presented by the Mayor, as received from the Government Finance Officers Association of the U. S. and Canada. Recipients of this Certificate have achieved the highest standards in government accounting and financial reporting. Appreciation is extended to Finance Officer Joan Hughes, as well as City Manager David Aldrich and members of Council for keeping the City in good financial shape.

As the Mayor gave an update regarding the City's Sign Ordinance, he reported that several different community groups and others had been involved in meetings to review the Ordinance. The goal is to continue to have several more meetings to review updates of the Ordinance before a draft is presented to Council.

Mayor Johnson reported that the City had received a very detailed document regarding a market study of the Hart State Park. The document included a concise list of what is believed the Park could support. The next step is to meet with the consultant about a master plan.

As the proposed annexation of the Hartwell Marina was discussed, Council received the first reading of Annexation Ordinance No. 2014-02.

The Mayor reported that a number of focus groups had met and continued to seek ways to make the community better. Projects being identified and worked on include downtown parking and signage, an increase in diversity to incorporate more talent for events, development of small business workshops, working with downtown businesses regarding central dumpsters to eliminate trash cans, and better communication in an effort to keep citizens informed of community happenings. As previously recommended by Councilman Hicks, the City Manager reported that the cost for inserting information in mailed out utility bills would be approximately \$250 - \$275 each time the information was included. The information would include issues of interest to citizens.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to accept a bid from Missions, Inc. of Norcross, Georgia in the amount of \$50,835 to install a remote monitoring system on the City's sewer lift stations, plus an annual maintenance cost of \$4,017. As explained by the City Manager, this SCADA system is part of the requirement under a Consent Order by EPD. As discussion began, Councilman Hicks commented that although he supported local bids, his biggest concern was technology. The local bidder, dscTech, with a bid amount of \$49,600 plus \$5,100 maintenance fee, has local software vs. Mission's completely web-based system. The motion to accept the bid from Missions was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously. Councilman Hicks further stated that this was a 3-year contract and could be rebid in three years, after which time dscTech could possibly have the necessary technology for the SCADA system.

Assistant Police Chief Stan Sayer reported that due to complaints received regarding speeding on Athens Street, the Police Department had increased patrol on the street during peak hours and also placed speed detection signs. As he presented the calculations of speeds checked over a period of time, he stated that police presence and monitoring would continue in an effort to slow traffic.

As discussion ensued regarding purchase of a used truck for the Water-Sewer Department, it was noted that the current budget included \$27,000 for a vehicle. The City Manager explained that the current truck used to pull heavy equipment was a 1996 Dodge Ram, which was purchased as a used truck in 2001. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to authorize Councilman Ethridge to work with the City Manager and Scottie Green of the Water-Sewer Department to locate a used truck, and bring back before Council. Councilman Hicks amended his motion to authorize Councilman Ethridge to work with the City Manager and Scottie Green to find a used truck less than the amount currently budgeted. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously to set the date for the September Council meeting on Tuesday, September 2, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. due to the first Monday being the Labor Day holiday.

Following discussion regarding upgrading water mains on Highway 51 and part of the downtown area, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to authorize the upgrade of the 12" water main on the Reed Creek Highway at a cost of \$37,597 as quoted by HD Supply Waterworks, and also improvements to the existing system downtown at a cost of \$35,926.88 as quoted also by HD Supply Waterworks. After further discussion, Councilman Ethridge amended his motion to only authorize the upgrade of the Highway 51 water main (from

the Water Treatment Plant to the bridge) at a cost of \$37,597, plus cost of the bore. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously. The City Manager will obtain contractor prices for the downtown water system upgrade and bring back before Council.

Interim Director of TORCH, Inc. Bonnie McFall addressed Mayor and Council regarding the submission of an application for grant funds from the Appalachian Regional Commission to assist in funding for the proposed Railroad Street Farmer's Market project. Following considerable discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to authorize the Mayor to sign the application documents seeking this grant, and agree that the City would provide in-kind services for the project. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously. Councilman Haynie reiterated that TORCH was not a City project.

Councilman Griggs moved to accept the recommendation of Appeal Hearing Officer Todd Townsend regarding the City's termination of Ms. Betty Harris. As read by Councilman Griggs, it was the recommendation of the Appeal Hearing Officer that the City Council affirm or approve the termination of Ms. Betty Harris's employment and that the City would pay Ms. Harris through April 25, 2014. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

#### Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks reported that Police Officer Kay Ankerich had begun a campaign to help children in the community by asking for donations of school supplies, etc. Officer Ankerich stated that she had been overwhelmed by the support she had received, and any donations could be dropped off at the Police Department, Hart Co. Sheriff's Department, Three Trees Veterinarian Clinic, or anyone may call her. Many of the children have single parents who have difficulty in supplying needs of their children.

Councilman Hicks also explained that Councilmembers were accomplishing things in the city more than ever, and he wished to take this opportunity to extend his appreciation to all members of Council for their hard work.

#### Citizen Comments:

- Mr. Ralph Kiser, Benson Street resident, reported that a sewer problem occurred recently at a home near his residence. He stated that there seemed to be a blockage in the line, but due to the City's sewer camera being broken, the blockage could not be located. He further explained that after a length of time the sewage was eventually pumped out.
- Mr. Larry Torrence stated that he felt a real sense of building momentum and felt the future was very bright for our community. He further stated that actions of Council and others had been very supportive in all levels of business.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner  
City Clerk

