

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

August 3, 2015

PRESENT: Mayor Brandon Johnson, Councilmembers Bill Griggs, Mike MacNabb, Tray Hicks, Billy Ethridge, and Arthur Craft

ABSENT: Councilmember Tony Haynie

OTHERS PRESENT: 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, August 3, 2015 in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Brandon Johnson.

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

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the July 6, 2015 regular council meeting, the July 13, 2015 called meeting, and the July 20, 2015 called meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to approve the minutes as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Mayor Johnson stated that Councilman Tony Haynie was absent from this meeting due to health issues of his wife, and asked that everyone please keep them in their prayers.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to ratify the recent expenditure of \$7,956.79 for trencher repair by Ditch Witch of Georgia.

As discussion ensued regarding quotes for a new lawnmower for the Sewer Department, the City Manager reported that mowers were tested on site at the waste water treatment facility, and it was determined that the one that tested best, especially on slopes, was the SCAG Tiger Cat from Rogers' Outdoor Equipment at a cost of \$7,100.00. This was the lowest quote, and as stated by the City Manager, the amount of \$7,500.00 was also budgeted for this equipment. A motion was made by Councilman Craft to accept the quote of \$7,100 for the SCAG Tiger Cat mower, but try in the future to purchase such items in the state of Georgia, since all quotes for a mower were received from companies in nearby South Carolina. When asked by Councilman Craft if the City tried to purchase the equipment in Georgia, the City Manager replied that he did not specify that when obtaining quotes. Councilman Craft withdrew his motion. It was stated by Councilman Hicks that he continually pushed local businesses, and would also like the City to make purchases in the state of Georgia as much as possible. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to go ahead and purchase the SCAG Tiger Cat mower at a cost of \$7,100.00 on the condition that in the future, quotes from businesses in the state of Georgia are made a priority. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously, 5 to 0. The City Manager stated that he would make this a priority moving forward.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to accept a proposal from A & T Fence, Inc. in the amount of \$6,325 for a fence to be located off Hodges Mill Road at the waste water treatment facility. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously, 5 to 0.

Following the second reading of Ordinance No. 2015-03, amending the alcohol ordinance, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve the Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously to accept Police Department Policies & Procedures regarding School Resource Officers, as submitted.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously to approve Resolution No. 2015-08-03 regarding the Municipal General Election to be held November 3, 2015. As stated by the Mayor, qualifying would begin August 31 and end September 2, 2015 at 4:30 p.m., with the qualifying fee for council seat set at \$72.00.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to appoint Ms. Janet Fleming as Election Superintendent.

Due to the first Monday in September being the Labor Day holiday, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs to set Tuesday, September 8, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. for the next regularly scheduled meeting of council. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

The Mayor reported that the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) was required by the state to be updated every ten years. He explained that discussions had been held between the city and county whereby details are worked out regarding services provided. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to move forward with signing the Service Delivery Strategy with the county, based on the present SDS we have today. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb. Councilman Griggs pointed out that this was a 10-year agreement and felt that Council owed it to the citizens of Hartwell to look at the SDS further. The City Manager stated that the SDS was a culmination of a number of people and both entities are working together for the best interest of the citizens. Mary Beth Focer questioned the possibility of deannexation, and also asked if there was a document that citizens could see concerning the SDS agreement. Ms. Focer was informed that the SDS document was available for viewing or copying upon request. As the vote was called, the motion was carried 4 to 1, with Councilman Griggs opposing, to move forward with signing the Service Delivery Strategy.

City Manager's Comments:

- A "Walk for Justice," sponsored by the NAACP, will be coming through Hartwell on August 17th. The walk, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Voter Rights Act, generated in Selma, Alabama and will end in Washington, DC.
- Currently under construction are the Johnny Street sewer project and the Hwy. 77 natural gas project.
- Reed Creek water main improvements complete and crews did a great job. Letters will be sent to all customers in this area regarding increased water pressure.
- Water plant sludge pond improvements were completed last week.
- City tax bills for 2009, 2010, and 2011 began going out this date
- Sidewalk around Middle School has now been completed.
- Citizens are asked to please put debris, such as leaves and limbs, on the edge of their yards behind sidewalks, and not on sidewalks.

Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks gave an update on Hart State Park, explaining that significant progress had been made, and a preliminary meeting with the Corps of Engineers would be scheduled later in September. He also reported that the City was on track with the budget for this project. Councilman Hicks also congratulated Taylor Green who won the Little League All-Star Home Run Derby, with 29 home runs, and congratulations were extended to all the boys and girls who competed this year.
- Councilman Craft stated that there continued to be a problem with people mowing lawns and stopping up drains, which needs to be corrected.
- Councilman Griggs announced that a convoy of military vehicles from WWI and WWII would be coming through Hartwell on September 24th. It was his hope that the community would come out and show support, possibly with bands, etc.

Citizen Comments:

Mr. Bruce Bate of All Hart Realty, along with several merchants, addressed Mayor and Council regarding parking problems around town. Mr. Bate stated that parking had been an ongoing problem for many years and they wished to address this issue. Comments were received from merchants of Scottie Drugs, Your Hearts Desire, and New York Pizza, who all stated that the parking situation was really bad, especially on days when court is being held at the courthouse. Also pointed out was the problem of employees parking in front of their own businesses. Mr. Mark Hurley of the former Enigma Customs on Franklin Street, which was destroyed by fire, stated that he was interested in leasing to the city this current vacant lot to be used as a parking lot. Downtown Development Authority Director Henley Cleary stated that parking spaces were available in the MLK parking lot, spaces offered by The Hartwell Sun and the First Citizens Bank, but merchants were not utilizing these spaces. Councilman Hicks also stated that he believed in less government, and felt the merchants should be asked to work on this issue. It was also stated by the Mayor that the issue could be a blended approach if everyone could come together with a system to correct the problem.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:20 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously, 5 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk