

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
January 6, 2014

Immediately prior to the opening of the January 6, 2014 regular council meeting, Hart County Probate Judge Bob Smith administered the oath of office to Mayor-Elect Brandon Johnson and Re-Elected Members of Council Tray Hicks, Billy Ethridge, and Arthur Craft.

Present at the meeting included Mayor Brandon Johnson, Councilmembers Arthur Craft, Billy Ethridge, Mike MacNabb, Tony Haynie, Tray Hicks, and Bill Griggs. Also present were City Attorney Robert Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, members of the Media/Press, and interested citizens. Absent from the meeting was City Manager David Aldrich.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was called to order by Mayor Johnson at approximately 7:00 p.m. Mayor Johnson welcomed everyone in attendance.

Following the invocation given by Pastor Mike Griffin, everyone present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Mayor's Comments:

- Schools have been cancelled for the following day due to inclement weather.
- Would like to review all Boards of the City to determine their need since some of them have been dormant for some time and may need to be reestablished. He would also like to see a member of city council assigned to each board to make sure they are carrying forth the duties of the City.
- City Manager David Aldrich has never missed a meeting, but is absent from this meeting due to the illness of his mother. Everyone is asked to please keep Mr. Aldrich and his mother in their prayers.

Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks urged owners of animals to please bring their pets in this evening due the very cold weather, and also make sure the elderly are taken care of.
- Councilman Haynie stated that any letters sent to him should be signed; otherwise, they would be ignored. He also was happy to report that the City's 2013 budget came in approximately \$900,000 under budget, and all city employees are to be congratulated for an outstanding job.

Councilman Ethridge stated that a correction should be made to the minutes of the December 2, 2013 regular council meeting, paragraph 18, to state "Councilman Ethridge stated that he would like the backhoe to come with a multi-purpose loader bucket and 'plumbed' for a hydraulic hammer" rather than purchased with a hydraulic hammer. A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve the minutes as corrected, as well as approval of the minutes of the December 2, 2013 public hearing. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

As noted by Councilman Haynie, it has been tradition to appoint the most senior member of council, as far as tenure on the council, to serve as Mayor Pro Tem. Therefore, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to elect Councilman Tray Hicks as Mayor Pro-Tem. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve the appointments of Mr. Carey Jackson of Skelton-Morris Associates, Ms. Connie Carter of Shops on The Square, and Ms. Kay Legg of Savannah River Theatre to serve on the Executive Board of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. These opened positions were the result of some of the current board members not meeting qualifications to serve.

Councilman Haynie stated that Council was in full support of the DDA, and after the DDA goes through a full application process for a new Director, the DDA should bring their selection before Council prior to the position being offered to someone. Mayor Johnson also expressed his desire for the DDA to become more in tune to economic development purposes. He suggested further that Hartwell's DDA/Main Street Program be evaluated to make sure tax dollars are being used wisely, and requested that the DDA attend as many council meetings as possible to keep council better informed. He also recommended that councilmembers attend some of the meetings of the DDA when possible.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to approve the reappointment of Mr. Terry Blackwell to serve as a Commissioner of the Hartwell Housing Authority, with term ending January 14, 2019.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge, seconded by Councilman Craft, and carried unanimously to accept the low bid of \$102,474.00 from Flint Equipment Company for a new John Deere Backhoe. Councilman Ethridge noted that part of the payment for the Backhoe would come from funds left over from last year's budget.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to approve the financing of the new fire engine through a Lease/Purchase Agreement with the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). The prior quoted interest rate was 2.67%.

Mayor Johnson stated that he would like to begin looking at a pro-business taskforce consisting of local business owners, on a volunteer basis, to meet on occasion to review the City's ordinances and provide the City with new ideas and recommendations. Councilman MacNabb agreed, stating that after being in business himself for 38 years, it would be nice for business owners to have a voice. Mayor Johnson further commented that this taskforce could hopefully also assist the Downtown Development Authority. Councilman Hicks echoed these suggestions, stating that possibly the Council could have a retreat in February to discuss such issues.

A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge, seconded by Councilman Craft, and carried unanimously to authorize the submittal of a letter of request to USDA Rural Development for Rural

Economic Development Loan & Grant (REDLG). Mayor Johnson stated that this had previously been approved by Council December 3, 2012 for Oakview Crossing, but due to a change in management, the City was asked to resubmit. Further, the grant would not be sought through the Electric Membership Corporation (EMC) as previously requested.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Haynie, and carried unanimously to table a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Community Affairs regarding the Main Street Program.

Public Comments:

- Ms. Freddie Glaze appeared before Mayor and Council to voice complaints of past actions of the Police Department and other issues.
- Ms. Mary Beth Focer stated that Ms. Glaze had courage to come before Mayor and Council, and had great hopes for Hartwell. Ms. Focer stated that anything the Mayor could do to keep Hartwell on a nice clean path would be appreciated.

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 Hicks and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner  
City Clerk