

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
July 7, 2014

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

The Hartwell City Council met in regular session on Monday, July 7, 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 Brandon Johnson.

Following the invocation given by City Manager David Aldrich, everyone present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Mayor's Comments:

- The annual Pre-4th celebration was a very successful weekend, with lots of organizations involved.
- The Greater Northeast Georgia Basketball Team has a "number five" state ranking and will be participating in national competition for a team academic award, a humanitarian award, and top seven scholar award. Mayor Johnson commended Mr. Lonnie Robinson for his efforts in instilling character and values into these young men.
- Council continues to work on the sign ordinance revision, with intentions to also have the business taskforce and possibly downtown merchants review the ordinance for input.
- Continuing to receive calls regarding traffic and speed, particularly around the area of Wal-Mart. Have spoken with the City Manager about drafting a letter to the DOT to address the problem.
- Welcomed two young ladies in attendance at this meeting, who have been helping at the YMCA. Councilman Griggs introduced the ladies as Ambassadors, stating that they were also staying in his and his wife's home while in Hartwell.
- Have received preliminary results from a study of the Hart State Park, which looks to be a feasible project that would have an economic impact on the community.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the June 2, 2014 regular meeting and the June 18, 2014 called meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

City Auditor Lloyd Williamson of Williamson & Co. CPA's presented the City's 2013 audit report. In presenting highlights of the audit, Mr. Williamson reported that the City had \$6,624,000 cash in the bank, an increase of \$265,000 over the previous year. As Mr. Williamson reviewed the audit's financial statements, he reported that overall the City was in good financial shape. He further stated that the City's budget was a working tool which should be reviewed throughout the year and amended when conditions allow.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Director Henley Cleary reported on recent and upcoming activities of the DDA. Also, upon request of the DDA, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs to approve the closing of certain streets for the annual Mayor's Monster Mash on October 31, 2014 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

A quarterly report of Chamber of Commerce activities was presented by Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Nicki Meyer. Ms. Meyer also requested funds in the amount of \$1,800.00 for the American Bass Anglers Regional Fishing Tournament scheduled for September 6 and 7, 2014. Funds were also requested for the scheduled September 27, 2014 Jim Austin Tournament in the amount of \$475.00. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve the request for \$1800 for the American Bass Anglers Regional Tournament and \$475 for the Jim Austin Tournament. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously. In noting that these funds are equal amounts requested from the city and county, Councilman MacNabb stated that he had no problem with supporting the tournaments, but felt a 50/50 split in matching funds was not fair to city taxpayers who paid both city and county taxes. He further stated that he had no fair formula at this time but would probably make a recommendation during the City's budget process.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously to approve a Memorandum of Understanding with the Hart County Archway Partnership Program. Councilman Hicks questioned if the \$12,000 expenditure from the City for the Archway Program included providing office space, to which the City Manager replied that the City provided the space. Councilman Hicks commented that Council may have to look at this during the coming year. Councilman MacNabb stated that this could possibly be considered an in-kind contribution.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept the Zoning Board's recommendation to approve the request of CSpag Properties, LLC (Chris Coile) to rezone approximately 1.36 acres of land near the intersection of East Johnson and Maple Streets from the current R-1 Zone to B-2, General Business District. The proposed use of the property by Mr. Coile and Mr. Duane Hall would be for a new, approximately 5,200 sq. ft. Funeral Home. Motion to approve was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to approve a request from Mr. Fushun Zhang of Kobe Express Restaurant for a license to sell beer only.

Mr. James Faulkner of Ridgewood Drive, located in the unincorporated area, addressed Mayor and Council requesting that the City take a look at fire hydrant locations and size of water lines in his area. Mr. Faulkner reported that his insurance ISO rating had gone from 6 to 9, which increased his home insurance by approximately \$200.00. He stated that insurance companies looked at fire hydrant locations and EPD standards required a 6" main for fire hydrants to be installed on a line, and it was his understanding that water pipes in the area were less than 6". He was also told by EPD that the City could request a waiver from EPD for the 6" pipe requirement. Mayor Johnson stated that he felt this request should be taken seriously and discussions should occur between the city

and county to see what options they may have. Councilman Hicks also stated that he would be more than willing to take a look at annexing the properties along the area into the city.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously to adopt Resolution Nos. 07-07-2014-1 and 07-07-2014-2, calling for a special referendum election regarding Sunday Sales of Alcohol. Councilman Hicks explained that Resolution No. 07-07-2014-1 provides for calling a special referendum election to determine whether or not the sale of alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises on Sundays from 12:30 p.m. until 12:00 midnight shall be permitted in the City of Hartwell. Resolution No. 07-07-2014-2 provides for calling a special referendum election to determine whether or not package sales by retailers of malt beverages and wine on Sundays between the hours of 12:30 and 11:30 p.m. shall be authorized in the City. Also declared in both Resolutions is the City's intent to authorize such sales only between the hours of 12:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Sundays.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously to accept the low bid of \$35,821.00 from Utilities Supply for materials and supplies for the Elberton Highway bare steel replacement project.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously to accept the low contract bid of \$94,130.00 from Harrison & Harrison, Inc. for installation of the bare steel replacement on the Elberton Highway.

City Manager's Report:

- GEMA grant has been finalized, with the City receiving \$51,000 in grant funds for three warning sirens; total cost of the sirens \$62,150.00. Target date for testing the sirens is scheduled for Friday, July 11th at 3:00 p.m.; thereafter, testing once per month.
- Sidewalk replacement along Franklin Street almost complete. Public Works and crew did great job on this project.
- Grant has been received from GA Rural Water Association for detection of water leaks on approximately 30 miles of water main. Water Treatment Plant Chief Operator Ken Lystiuk is to be commended for working on this.
- A pre-application has been submitted to GA Rural Water Association for a grant for desired work at the Water Treatment Plant.
- Street resurfacing currently underway in the city and expected to be completed the following week, weather permitting.
- Gas Superintendent Audie Laviolette, Audrey Segars, and the entire Gas Department are to be commended for their work, along with the assistance of the Gas Authority, on the City's natural gas Public Awareness Program (PAP). Representatives from the GA Public Service Commission were very complimentary of the City's Gas Department employees, and would like to use Hartwell's PAP as a model for the state. The Gas Superintendent has also been asked to give a presentation at the Georgia Municipal Association Gas Section meeting next week in Savannah.

Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks reported that the City's surplus vehicles may be viewed on the government surplus auction website at "GovDeals.com." Also, an aggressive approach is being taken at the Water Treatment Plant regarding the taste and odor in the city's water, by adding activated carbon during the month of June. Several Hartwell baseball and softball recreation leagues are to be commended for going on to the state. Councilman Hicks reported also that he attended three training classes recently at the Georgia Municipal Association Conference in Savannah, and felt it was a very good convention.
- Councilman MacNabb expressed appreciation to Representative Alan Powell for his assistance in obtaining the grant for the three new warning sirens.
- Councilman Craft commended Chief of Police Anthony Davis and the Police Department for re-routing of traffic during the annual Pre-4th event.

Citizen Comments:

- Mr. Ralph Kiser stated that citizens of Hartwell were also citizens of Hart County and felt that it was not fair for city residents to have to pay an equal portion with the county for certain projects, as earlier commented by Councilman MacNabb. He urged Council to do whatever they could to help the citizens of Hartwell regarding taxation. Mr. Kiser also referred to the consolidation of governments in Charlotte, NC, explaining that it was working very well and saving lots of money.

There being no further comments or business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:38 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk