

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

July 6, 2015

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held Monday, July 6, 2015 in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell. Present were Mayor Brandon Johnson, Councilmembers Arthur Craft, Mike MacNabb, Bill Griggs, Tray Hicks, Tony Haynie, and Billy Ethridge. Also present were City Manager David Aldrich, City Attorney Robert Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, Representatives of the Media/Press, and Interested Citizens.

Mayor Brandon Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. Following the invocation given by City Manager David Aldrich, the Mayor led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Upon recommendation of the Mayor, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to add to the agenda discussion of alleys on the town square and also discussion of crosswalk on Benson Street. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to add these items to the agenda.

Mayor's Comments:

- Annual Pre-4th Extravaganza went really well except for the weather.
- Mayor and Council attended various training classes during the annual Georgia Municipal Association conference held recently in Savannah.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the June 1, 2015 regular council meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

Upon recommendation of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to appoint Ms. Stephanie Crump as a DDA Board member, replacing Ms. Kaye Legg upon her resignation. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept a quote from MES, Inc. in the amount of \$27,779.79 for extrication tools and equipment for the Fire Department. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously. It was noted that funds were appropriated in the budget for purchase of these items.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to ratify Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia Portfolio IV Contracts. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Mayor and Council heard the first reading of Ordinance No. 2015-03, amending certain provisions to allow the sale of malt beverages and wine in establishments that qualify as entertainment venues, such as live performances in music halls or community theatres which have fixed seating capacity for 90 or more patrons. As discussion ensued, Councilman Griggs asked that the term "fixed" be removed from Section 4.1 of the Ordinance, under the "entertainment venue" definition. He explained that it would be difficult for such establishments as theatre venues to remove fixed seating in order to place tables for dinner theatres. Following discussion, the City Manager and City Attorney agreed to come up with revisions to the wording prior to final adoption of the Ordinance.

As discussion ensued regarding the possibility of constructing pocket parks in the city, Mayor Johnson explained that pocket parks were designed for gathering places mainly for parents and children, with the concept of bringing together people in the community. He suggested the corner of Faye Kight Circle and Rome Street as a possible location for a pocket park, which is also city-owned property. Councilman Hicks suggested that the City begin with a small park to include items such as a swing set, grill, and picnic table. It was also pointed out by Councilman Craft that it would be the responsibility of the citizens in the area to keep the park up. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to authorize the City Manager to proceed with construction of a pocket park at the corner of Faye Kight Circle and Rome Street. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs. Upon recommendation by Councilman Hicks, the motion was amended by Councilman Craft, as well as the second by Councilman Griggs, to also include that the cost of the project be kept under \$5,000.00. Motion carried unanimously, 6 to 0.

Upon recommendation of the City's Economic Development Committee, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve a request for loan funds in the amount of \$62,500 from Economic Development Revolving Loan Funds, at 4% interest for ten (10) years. The loan application was submitted by Christopher and Angela Unruh for operation of the local "Market 50" Store/Deli located at 50 North Forest Avenue, Hartwell. Motion to approve the loan request was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

Councilman Hicks reported that over the course of time there had been confusion of ownership of alleys around the town square. In order to clear up the confusion, Councilman Hicks moved to authorize the City Attorney to work on this matter to determine who owns the alleys off the town square. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Councilman Hicks explained that an engineering study had been conducted on five different locations for possible crosswalks: three on Franklin Street and two on Benson Street. The only location the engineers could recommend for a crosswalk was Benson Street at Alford Road (from Library across Benson.) The engineering report also recommended installation of a Hawk Hybrid Pedestrian Beacon or a lower cost alternative Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to authorize the City Manager to submit the engineering report to the Department of Transportation for approval to install the crosswalk and to find out what the actual cost would be. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

City Manager's Report:

- Projects underway include Johnny Street sewer upgrade project; water treatment plant improvement approximately 60 - 75% complete; Hwy. 51 project a little more than 80% complete; sidewalk project underway at Middle School; and, continuing with poultry house projects and Hwy. 77 natural gas pipeline replacement project.

Council Comments:

- Wish to compliment members of council for attending training sessions during the Georgia Municipal Association conference in Savannah. By attending these training sessions, members of council are working toward the betterment of our community.

Citizen Comments:

- Mr. Jerry Cannady suggested Mayor and Council look into alternative routes for traffic, such as truck routes, due to heavy traffic buildup coming through the city.
- Mr. Lonnie Robinson expressed his appreciation for Council's discussion of pocket parks. As a proponent of the community's youth, he commended Council for trying to do something for the betterment of Hartwell.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:43 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk