

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
March 7, 2011

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held Monday, March 7, 2011 in the council chambers of City Hall, 500 E. Howell Street, Hartwell. Absent from the meeting was Councilman Van Senkbeil.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jennifer Scott, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Following a moment of silence, an invocation was given by Rev. Sam Delaney.

As the Mayor reported that March was National Women's History Month, she asked that citizens pay tribute to a favorite teacher or role model who has touched their lives. She read the following quote from former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt: "You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.' You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

Hearing no corrections or additions to the minutes of the February council meeting, a motion was made by Councilwoman Sarah Mayfield to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Arthur Craft and carried unanimously.

Councilman David Little moved to authorize the signing of a resolution and other documents pertaining to the financing of a new city hall. Motion was seconded by Councilman Tray Hicks and carried unanimously.

Mr. Jerry Cannady addressed Mayor and Council regarding consolidation of city and county governments. Mr. Cannady explained that some citizens had indicated an interest in consolidation of the two governments, and while he was not advocating consolidation, he was requesting Council's support in getting our state representatives to take action to pass enabling legislation, after which a commission would be appointed to study the issue. Six commission members would be appointed by the city and six appointed by the county, and these members would jointly select five additional members, all of whom could not be elected officials. Further, each governing authority would be authorized to appropriate a minimum of \$5,000 each for expenses incurred by the commission in completing the study. Following completion of the study, a recommendation would be made as to whether or not a single county-wide government should be placed on a referendum for voters to approve or reject. As discussion ensued, Councilman Hicks stated that he could never take away a citizen's right to vote on an issue, and therefore moved to go forward with this endeavor and invest \$5,000 for the commission study. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield. Upon further discussion, Councilman Little felt that consolidation would not benefit the citizens, although some services, such as the jail, could be conducted more efficiently by consolidation. As the vote was called, motion failed 3 to 2, with Councilmembers Ethridge, Little, and Craft opposing, and Councilmembers Hicks and Mayfield in favor. Mayor Scott commented that she agreed that a decision of this nature should be left in the hands of the people.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve a request from the Hart County Chamber of Commerce for the annual "Cars & Guitars" Classic Car Show on May 28, 2011. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously to approve a request from the Downtown Development Authority for the following annual events:

- Dancin' on Depot - June 24, 2011
- Arts in hARTwell Festival – September 24, 2011
- Mayor's Monster Mash - October 31, 2011
- Tree Lighting Festival – November 22, 2011

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield, seconded by Councilman Little, and carried unanimously to approve a request from the Hartwell Service League for the annual Pre-4th Extravaganza on June 25, 2011.

In discussing the Department of Transportation Investment Act of 2010, City Manager David Aldrich explained that the City needed to go ahead and submit its request for street improvement funding. He stated that he had a list of approximately 60 streets needing improvements and asked Mayor and Council to provide him with any specific streets they wished to add. As Councilman Hicks asked for a copy of the City Manager's list of streets, Mr. Aldrich stated that the list would be provided to Mayor and Council the following day. Councilman Billy Ethridge expressed concern over the need to widen Fairview Avenue, from the 4-way stop to Hwy. 29. The City Manager replied that rights-of-way would probably have to be acquired from residents. Due to the many students who travel on Fairview, Councilman Hicks stated that sidewalks for this street should be reviewed as well. Councilman Ethridge stated that he would be willing to speak to residents of Fairview regarding rights-of-way. Councilwoman Mayfield stated that the City needed to know how much right-of-way would be needed and what utilities would have to be relocated before speaking with residents.

In considering bids for three new pickup trucks, two for the Gas Department and one for the Sewer Department, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to accept the low bid of \$21,725 each from James Short Ford. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield. Upon being asked by Councilman Hicks why the City is purchasing F-250 trucks, the City Manager replied that the trucks were utility trucks. Councilman Hicks felt that there was no reason why supervisors needed to ride around in big trucks, when smaller trucks would be more economical. Mayor Scott also asked if used vehicles had been considered. The City Manager replied that used vehicles had not been, but could be considered. He felt these heavy utility trucks were more effective in the performance of duties associated with the Gas Department and Sewer Department. Councilman Ethridge stated that the second lowest bidder, Ed Murdock, had a business in the city and he felt local businesses should be patronized, especially when the amount of the bid was only \$74.00 more. In view of this information, Councilman Craft withdrew his motion, as well as the second to the motion withdrawn by Councilwoman Mayfield. A motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to accept the bid from Ed Murdock for three F-250 pickup trucks in the amount of \$21,799 each.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to approve a request for gas line extensions to service four poultry houses for Milford Farms on Moore Road, and four poultry houses for the Orsley Farm located on Allen Orsley Road.

A motion was made by Councilman Little, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to authorize the City Manager to seek bids for a new garbage truck. As explained by the City Manager, two trucks had recently been out of service for repairs, and funds have been set aside for the last several years for a new truck.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:45 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk