

CITY OF HARTWELL
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
May 6, 2013

PRESENT: Mayor Jennifer Scott, Councilmembers Billy Ethridge, Arthur Craft, Tony Haynie, David Little, Mike MacNabb and Tray Hicks, City Manager David Aldrich, City Attorney Rob Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, Members of the Press, and Interested Citizens.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held on Monday, May 6, 2013 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 Jennifer Scott. Mayor Scott asked that everyone please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Following a moment of silence, the invocation was given by City Manager David Aldrich.

Mayor Scott announced the following:

- Due to rainy weather, the First Saturday event scheduled for May 4th has been changed to May 18th. The event will be held at the Hartwell Marina, with musical entertainment by "Borderline."
- Hart Community Food Ministry "Kids Helping Kids" walk on May 11th at Middle School track beginning at 10:00 a.m. Sponsored by the Hart County Sheriff Department and Hartwell Police Department, this event is to raise money for the Food Ministry to assist low-income families.
- Lake Hartwell Music Festival scheduled for May 25th at 1:00 p.m. at the Lake Hartwell Mega Ramp to benefit Hart Youth Development Resource Association (HYDRA.) Admission fee is \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for children.
- May is Mental Health Awareness Month.
- May 6-10 is National Teacher Appreciation Week, with May 7th as National Teacher Day.
- May 12th is Mother's Day, and May 27th National Memorial Day.
- Proclamation read by Mayor proclaiming May as American Military History Month, calling on all Americans to show appreciation for our military.

Hearing no corrections or additions to the minutes of the April 1, 2013 regular council meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Little to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Councilman Little explained that he would like to see two additional items added to the agenda each month. He suggested that council comments and public comments be added at the end of the monthly agendas. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little to add council comments to the meeting agendas on a monthly basis beginning with this meeting agenda. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Little to add public comments to the monthly agendas beginning this month. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft. Councilman Little felt that this would give the public an opportunity to speak on items of concern, and also suggested that a time limit of 2 to 5 minutes for each speaker could be established. Councilman Haynie also suggested two additional restrictions: (1) once a particular subject is discussed, don't repeat over and over; (2) personnel issues are not to be discussed. Mayor Scott added a correction, stating "I do not restrict public comments. Each time a motion and second is made, I call for discussion and discussion includes anybody at the meeting." As the Mayor called for the vote, motion carried unanimously, 6 to 0.

A motion was made by Councilman Little to add "council comments" to this meeting agenda as item #19 and add "public comments" to this agenda as item #20. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Chamber of Commerce Director Nicki Meyer updated Mayor and Council on upcoming Chamber events. Ms. Meyer also requested approval for the annual "Cars & Guitars" event and street closings scheduled for May 25th. A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve the event and street closings as requested. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little to approve Resolution No. 2013-05-06, declaring the Railroad Street Project area as a “slum area” and designating the area as appropriate for an urban redevelopment project area under the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

Ms. Jennifer Los, Area Coordinator for Community Partners for Protecting Children (CPPC), presented a brief overview regarding the purpose of CPPC. She stated this was an initiative based on reform and change, working to develop community response to the underlying causes of child abuse and neglect and to strengthen families before a crisis occurs. Upon being asked by the Mayor if there was a need for training facilities, Ms. Los replied that some training had been conducted at the Hart Partners facility, but some type of center was needed. Councilman Little also asked Ms. Los if she or someone else could come to local churches and speak, to which she replied “absolutely.”

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to approve the nomination of the following for Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) District 2 Officers for 2013-2014:

- President: Jim Conley, Mayor, Blairsville
- First Vice President: Gerald Lord, Councilmember, Dahlonega
- Second Vice President: Harold Harbin, Councilmember, Lavonia
- Third Vice President: Keith Turman, Councilmember, Royston

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept the bid of \$722,685 from Sutphen Corporation for a new fire apparatus. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously. Fire Chief Terry Vickery reported that the delivery date would be about 9 to 12 months. The City Manager also reported that he had spoken with Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) regarding a possible lease-purchase agreement for the new fire apparatus.

As discussion ensued regarding funding of salary for the recently appointed new Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Director, it was felt by Mayor and Council that an additional \$10,000 from the City’s Economic Development Fund had already been approved in this year’s budget for the Director’s salary, but records did not indicate this action. A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve the allocation of \$10,000 from Economic Development Funds for an addition to the DDA Director’s salary. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

The City Manager reported that he had received a quote from Trion for the City’s property and liability insurance, which was approximately \$200.00 less than last year. He further stated that Trion had been an extremely good firm to work with. A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Haynie, and carried unanimously to accept the quote from Trion. Councilman Haynie stated that he would like to have future quotes two or three months prior to renewal date. The City Manager replied that he and Councilman Arthur Craft, Chairman of the City’s Insurance Committee, had already spoken about this.

The City Manager asked for authorization to seek bids for resurfacing of two streets under DOT’s Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant (LMIG) Program. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to authorize the City Manager to seek bids for resurfacing of Legion and Gibson Streets. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Upon request from the City Manager, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to authorize the City Manager to seek bids for gas main replacement on Savannah Street and Savannah Street Extension. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously. The City Manager stated that several leaks had been detected on these streets and he would like to replace approximately 4000 – 4500 feet of steel pipe with 2” P.E. pipe.

The City Manager reported on the following issues:

- Citizens are asked not to blow grass clippings into the streets when mowing, which is a violation of the City’s ordinance and can also become a hazard with motorists, or drainage problems caused by rain washing the debris.

- Three dilapidated houses have been cleared and some signed off on, with demolition to follow once results are received from samples taken by an Environmental Firm. If samples come back clear, demolition will begin; if not clear, will get a quote from a firm to mitigate and then proceed with demolition. Councilman Haynie felt demolition by the City should be a last resort and expressed concern of property liens. The City Manager stated a lien is not against a person, but against the property.
- Power has been installed at the mega ramp, with lights and power panel set up.

Councilman Little encouraged all councilmembers to attend the GMA Listening Session this Thursday evening in Lavonia.

Councilman Hicks requested that all members of council look at the sidewalk, which is in need of repair, in front of All Hart Realty located on West Howell Street.

Mayor and Council heard complaints from a couple of citizens regarding the Hartwell Housing Authority and its Director. Mayor Scott informed the citizens that there was a complaint procedure in place and while she did appoint members to the Housing Authority Board, it was the duty of the Board to oversee the Housing Authority Director. She further stated that all questions and concerns could be answered by the Housing Authority Board of Directors at their next meeting. She also stated that she would be attending this meeting once the date is set.

As several students from Matt Beasley's high school government class were in attendance at the meeting, one student asked about the quality of the fire truck the City was purchasing. The Fire Chief answered that this would be a top of the line aerial fire truck. Another question was posed as to why the City needed a 75' ladder truck. Fire Chief Vickery stated that it was not about height, but it was about reach, and this was one of the shortest ladders made.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk