

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
May 5, 2014

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

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hartwell City Council was held Monday, May 5, 2014 in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Brandon Johnson at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Following the invocation given by Pastor Wesley Martin of Impact Church, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Mayor Johnson announced that he had received two letters requesting annexation of the Hartwell Marina property; one letter from Hartwell Marina, and one from an adjoining property owner. The Mayor stated that these requests would begin the process of annexation. Upon discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to add to this meeting agenda the authorization to have engineers prepare cost estimates for extending sewer service to the requested annexed property. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

A Proclamation was read by the Mayor and presented to Historic Preservation Chairperson Nancy Clark, proclaiming May 2014 as National Preservation Month. Ms. Clark expressed appreciation to Mayor and Council, and issued an invitation to each of them to attend an event at the Art Center on Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m., with a preservationist from the state as guest speaker, and also the viewing of approximately 60 photograph exhibits by local citizens.

Councilman Craft pointed out that a correction was needed to the minutes of the April 7, 2014 regular council meeting to correct his statement under "Council Comments" to read: "Councilman Craft stated that the Hart County Health Department Board met last month and out of 159 counties in the state, the citizens of Hartwell and Hart County ranked number 45." Hearing no further additions or corrections, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs to approve the minutes of April 7, 2014, with the noted correction, and also approval of the minutes of the April 29, 2014 called meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

Upon request for annexation of the Hartwell Marina property, a motion was made by Councilman MacNabb to authorize the City's engineers to prepare cost estimates for extending sewer service to the Marina property. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

Mayor Johnson explained the Georgia Downtown Renaissance Fund Act, HB 128, which implements many of the recommendations of the Special Downtown Development Task Force. HB 128 authorizes funding at an annual appropriation of up to \$5 million for 4 years, focusing on small downtowns. The Mayor stated that the idea of the program was to bring specialist in to look at the city as a whole to help the city have a more comprehensive plan for the downtown area. He also explained that if the City signed up now for the program, it would save approximately \$7,500.00, with no payment required upfront. He further reported that the total cost to participate in the program is estimated to be approximately \$30,000 - \$33,000, depending on private donations, previous accomplishments for the downtown area, etc. Councilman Hicks stated that after meeting with Mr. Danny Bevins of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, he was very excited about the program and offered a motion that the City move forward with a pilot program to take advantage of the Downtown

Renaissance Fund Program. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge. As further discussion ensued, Councilman Haynie reminded Council that the City did not have any excess money floating around and he would be hard-pressed to spend taxpayer money on the project, but would be ok with private donations. Councilman Hicks clarified his motion, reiterating that the City move forward with the Program and find out exactly what it would cost. The Mayor also suggested that the City Manager contact Mr. Bevins regarding the City's willingness to participate in the Program, with a non-financial commitment at this time. As Ms. Mary Beth Focer asked Mayor and Council if they had seen proposed plans for downtown Hartwell, they were not certain which plans she was referring to. Ms. Focer explained that the Downtown Development Authority had recent plans almost exactly like the Railroad Street Project. Mayor Johnson informed Ms. Focer that the Renaissance Program had nothing to do with the Railroad Street Project, but was intended for the whole downtown area. As the Mayor called for the vote, the motion was carried unanimously, 6 to 0.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously to approve a request for outdoor seating for Market 50 located at 50 North Forest Avenue.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft to approve the proposed GMA District 2 Officers for 2014-2015 as follows: President, Harold Harbin, Lavonia Councilmember; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Keith Turman, Royston Councilmember; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Danny Dunagan, Gainesville Mayor, and; 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, James Grogan, Mayor of Dawsonville. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously to select Councilman Tray Hicks as voting delegate for the Georgia Municipal Association Membership Business Meeting to be held during GMA's Annual Convention in Savannah next month.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously to approve a Resolution and Supplemental Contract for Gas Portfolio IV Project between the City and Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to change the street name of "Powell Road," from the section of Fairview Avenue to Randall Street, to the name of "Parkdale Road." Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Griggs, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to appoint Attorney Todd Townsend as Hearing Officer regarding a personnel issue.

#### City Manager's Comments:

- Obtaining bids for paving of streets as part of the DOT's LMIG Program;
- Quotes were obtained for pumps at YMCA Lift Station, with Council's prior approval of a new Smith & Loveless pump station in the amount of \$63,469.00. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to ratify Council's approval of the quote of \$63,469.00. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously. Councilman Ethridge also reported that one other quote was received in the amount of approximately \$83,000.00.

#### Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks reported that many events were held during the past weekend, including live Bands at two restaurants, a great Play performance, two car races, and the "First Saturday" summer event. He encouraged everyone to enjoy some of the planned local events rather than going out of town.

- Councilman Ethridge expressed appreciation to all citizens who used the recycling center. He urged more citizens to begin recycling, explaining that every ton recycled saved \$40.00 at the Transfer Station.
- Councilman Griggs echoed Councilman Hicks' comment by stating that the Play performance of "Beauty and the Beast" over the weekend was fantastic. He also urged local citizens to offer a "thank you" to anyone they meet who may be visiting the area.

There being no further comments or business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:50 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner  
City Clerk