

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
December 7, 2015

PRESENT: Mayor Brandon Johnson, Councilmembers Arthur Craft, Billy Ethridge, Tray Hicks, Mike MacNabb, Bill Griggs, and Tony Haynie.

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager David Aldrich, City Attorney Robert Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, Members of the Press/Media, and Interested Citizens.

The City of Hartwell Mayor and Council met in regular session on Monday, December 7, 2015 in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell, Georgia. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Brandon Johnson at approximately 7:00 p.m., who welcomed everyone in attendance.

Following the invocation given by Mayor Johnson, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Haynie, and carried unanimously to add one item to the agenda to discuss sidewalks around the schools and possibly to the Recreation Department.

Mayor's Comments:

- Would like to ask Council to consider giving city employees an extra one-half day off on Wednesday, December 23rd during the Christmas holidays. Councilman MacNabb moved to allow the extra one-half day off for employees. Motion seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.
- Request also that Council allow the annual parade for the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church "Our Lady of Guadalupe" to be held on December 13th beginning at 10:15 a.m. at the Hart County Library and ending at Sacred Heart Catholic Church on Benson Street. Motion was made by Councilman Griggs, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to approve the parade request. Councilman Hicks also stated that he would like for Council to look at putting together some approved parade routes that would not be so costly.
- A "thumbs up" is given for the recent Tour of Homes, and also for the Christmas lights across the top of the businesses on Depot Street, as well as throughout the city.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of November 2, 2015 public hearing and regular council meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Following the second reading of Ordinance No. 2015-05, adopting the city's 2016 budget, a motion was made by Councilman Craft to approve the Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Mayor and Council heard the first reading of Ordinance No. 2015-06 regarding speed zones as requested by the Department of Transportation. The speed zones listed by the DOT will be reviewed and any recommendations will be made to the state level.

Mayor and Council heard the first reading of Ordinance No. 2015-07 regarding howling and barking dogs. Councilman Hicks questioned the section in the Ordinance that stated that any complaints concerning dogs would have to be in writing to the Chief of Police and signed by the complaining party. He requested that this language be removed from the Ordinance and felt that the complaining party should be able to just call the Police Department to issue the complaint and not have to sign a complaint. The City Attorney stated that he would review other Ordinances regarding this issue.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Haynie, and carried unanimously to accept the low bid of \$10,206.00 from Reed's Welding & Fabrication for a covered structure for the cardboard baler at the City's Public Works Building. It was stated by the City Manager that this was a budgeted item.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Griggs, and carried unanimously to approve alcohol license renewals for 2016 as submitted. The Mayor also reported that hearings would be scheduled for January 2016 for two businesses that had been cited for selling alcohol to minors.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to approve a beer/wine license for Chandan S. Pandey of Jimbo's #4, located at 1035 E. Franklin Street.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to approve Resolution No. 12-07-15, declaring unopposed candidates (Mike MacNabb, Tony Haynie, and Bill Griggs) as elected, for a full term of four years.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to approve Police Department Policy updates regarding Internet Use & Online Social Networking, and Vehicle Roadblocks.

A motion was made by Councilman MacNabb, seconded by Councilman Craft, and carried unanimously to approve the following as surplus items for auction on the GovDeals website:

- 1988 Vacuum Machine
- 2004 Snapper Pro 61" Riding Mower
- Exmark Walk-Behind 42" Mower
- 370 Motor for Ford Truck

As discussion ensued regarding the downtown water system improvement project, City Manager David Aldrich reported that only one bid was received. He stated that bids were advertised twice in the local newspaper, as well as plans and specs sent to Plan Rooms, where contractors receive notification of bidding opportunities. Mr. Aldrich further stated that two contractors picked up plans

and specifications, but only one submitted a bid. The other contractor had been awarded another contract a few days prior to the City's bid opening and therefore chose not to submit a bid for the City's project. In view of the fact that the Department of Transportation had put the City on notice that they would be resurfacing State Route 8 (Howell Street), Mr. Aldrich had concerns of the street being resurfaced by DOT prior to the City making cuts in the street for the water system project. As he asked Council for direction to either accept the one bid or rebid, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to accept the bid from Cedar Farms in the amount of \$233,881 for installation only. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously. The contractor's estimated cost for pipe, materials and supplies totaled approximately \$50,000, making the total project cost around \$284,000.00. It was noted that funding for the project would come out of SPLOST funds.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously to reappoint Mr. Clyde McDowell as a member of the Board of Health.

Due to the resignation of Mr. Hugh Temple as a member of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), it was the recommendation of Mayor Johnson to appoint Ms. Rebecca Metzger to serve on the HPC. It was also noted that no other recommendations had been received by the City for consideration. A motion was made by Councilman MacNabb, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to appoint Ms. Rebecca Metzger to serve as a member of the Historic Preservation Commission.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to approve a request for North Hart Elementary School's 5-K run to be held in February 2016. As explained by the City Manager, the original route for the run had been modified in order to stay off state routes, with minimized cost for extra Police Department personnel. The 5-K run will take place in the Smith Street, Highland Avenue, and Laurel Street area.

As Council began discussing utility poles on Athens Street, Mayor Johnson recommended that a letter be drafted to the Department of Transportation, Georgia Power Company, Hart Telephone, Comcast, etc. to possibly have utility poles placed underground. Councilman Hicks stated that he preferred a letter first be drafted to the Department of Transportation, seeking encouragement from the DOT to the utility companies for underground placement of the poles. Mayor Johnson stated that he and the City Manager would draft a letter to DOT and then to utility companies.

As discussion ensued regarding progress of sidewalks around the schools, Councilman Hicks stated that he would like to see the County partner with the City in possibly extending sidewalks to the Hart County Recreation Department. The City Manager agreed to draft a letter to the County regarding this. Councilman Hicks also suggested that due to high foot traffic in the area of Ingles Markets, Wal-Mart, and Home Depot on Highway 29 North, businesses in the area may also be willing to contribute something for the possible extension of sidewalks in that area.

Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks stated that Hartwell's current sidewalks are not that bad compared to other towns. Referring to his recent visit to the town of Clayton, he stated that the town was booming and very busy, but the sidewalks were not that great.
- Councilman Haynie reminded everyone that the City's current animal control ordinance had a provision for tethering of dogs, only allowing the animals to be tethered during a 4-hour period per day. He asked that citizens please contact the Police Department if they observe any tethering offense.

Citizen Comments:

- Mary Beth Focer addressed Mayor and Council regarding several issues. She stated that Police Department fine revenue had quadrupled from 2014 to 2015 and city officials may want to attend traffic court to see what was going on. She also voiced complaint of not receiving all the information she had requested from the City. She stated that she paid the city approximately \$100.00 for requested information, but only received selected information and therefore wanted her money refunded. Councilman Hicks read her original request, asking for zoning minutes from years 2000-2015. The City Manager commented that the Zoning Administrator only provided copies of the information he thought she wanted, and not anything to do with such things as variances or other issues. Ms. Focer stated that she was also requesting that she be allowed to look at all zoning files and would pay for the City Clerk's time to babysit her while she looked through the files. The City Manager stated that he understood from previous comments that Ms. Focer wanted copies of annexations, and those records could be provided easily. Following considerable discussion, no action was taken.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk

